(peligones). Lychnidis, the Roman name for the lake of Ochrida, is 622
possibly the Albanian "Licheni," a lake. And the Molotti, or Molossi, 623
may mean mountain men, as does the Albanian Maltsor, from Maltais mountains. (Usually incorrectly spelt Malessori, an Italianised form, it being against the principles of Italian to put "lt" together.)

The Romans drove the Illyrian tribes into rugged ground. Similarly 175
in North Albania of to-day the tribes owe their continued existence in a great part to the mountains. Conquerors always take the fat lands, 179
leaving the lean to the conquered—if they leave them any. That many descendants of the ancient people survived is shown by the tradition to-day in the mountains that "Latini" or "Pagani" or "Anas" were living on the lands when the ancestors of the present tribes arrived. "Anas" is Albanian for "indigenous."

Roughly speaking, the man who tilled the soil and who herded beasts 175
has been rudely displaced three times on the west side of the Balkan peninsula. (1) By the invading Roman. (2) By the invading Serb. (3) By the invading Turk.

The history of the present tribes is mainly that of the third displacement. Each tribe has a tale of origin. Unfortunately first the Balkan wars of 1912-13 and then the Great War interrupted and ended my work before I had collected them all. I give such details as I gathered.

The Albanian tribe (Fis) descends from one male ancestor (or several). 619
All persons tracing descent from the same male ancestor, no matter how [583]
distant, are reckoned "brothers and sisters," and are not intermarriageable. The law of exogamy is most strictly observed. The heads of families know by heart surprisingly long pedigrees—knowledge of [621]
great importance, as both marriage and blood vengeance are regulated by consanguinity. We may be certain that groups which will not 592
intermarry have in truth a common male ancestor. Women do not 602
count. The child, I was told, has none of its mother's blood. Whence 611
it follows that tribes which continually intermarry because they have not a common male ancestor are, in fact, often very closely related on the female side, having given daughters to, and taken wives from, each other for generations. But they jeered at me heartily when I suggested this.

Tribal instinct is far stronger than Church law. Many of these 779
exogamous tribes are Catholic. The Catholic Church prohibits the 582
marriage of second cousins—but no further. I asked an Albanian Franciscan, a tribesman himself, how he reconciled this with his strongly expressed opinion that to marry "one's own blood," however remote, was incest. "Suppose some fourth or fifth cousins asked you to marry them, could you, as priest, refuse?" He was much upset.

## *The Tribes of Albania and Montenegro*

Selti—three hundred houses, all Catholic—is at the head of the Tsem 103
valley, a lovely spot. It is divided into Djenovich Selti, which forms 779
the majority and traces descent from the reputed ancestor Klimeni, 596
and the Rabijenovich Selti, which is of another stock, and some say 614
is related to a tribe near Rijeka in Montenegro (? Termnitsa).

Vukli lies at the other source of the Tsem and consisted of ninety-four
families, all Catholic.

Boga is at the head of the Proni Thant, above Skreli. Seventy-five [582]
families, all Catholic. Boga intermarries much with Thethi. Nikshi,
one hundred and fifty-four houses, almost all Moslem, lies between
Boga and Vukli. All these people winter on the plains near Scutari to
feed their flocks. They, too, have suffered much from the new frontier, [321
which was purposely drawn by the Montenegrins so as to cut the road 648]
and make their journeys to the plain and town very difficult. Montenegro
and the Serbs hoped thus to force Klimenti to fall into their
hands, and the authorities sent by the Powers to delimit frontiers
were too ignorant of the manner of life of the people to see into the
matter. So-called "strategical" frontiers, drawn heedless of economic
needs, are more likely to promote war than to prevent it.

6. *Lohe*, or Lohja, a small tribe of one bairak, consisting of eighty 619
Moslem and forty Catholic houses. Of mixed descent from Shlaku 614
and Pulati. Probably families flowed down into this more fertile district 779
not far from the lake when Serb rule broke up, for "Loho" and its [174
mills are mentioned in 1348 by Stefan Dushan among the districts 796]
which are given to the Church.

7. *Rechi*, a small Moslem tribe, gives same tale of origin as Lohja; 619
and has also a few houses of "Anas." 596

8. *Rioli*, on the river, obviously takes its name from *rivulus*, [779
another memento of Roman days. It is all Catholic. The cloth-fulling
mills still clack on the river, and perhaps stand in the same place as 248]
some of those given away by Dushan. Like Rechi-Lohja, it is of mixed 648
descent. These eight tribes form the Maltsia e Madhe group.

There are also on the shores of the lake two small Moslem tribes, 619
Kopliku and Grizha. Kopliku as "Kopelnik" is also one of the places 779
mentioned in Tsar Dushan's list. Between Kopliku and Scutari is the 103
only Serb village of the whole district, Vraka, which derives its name [776]
from the Saints Vrachi: The Healers, SS. Cosmo and Damian, to whom
the church was dedicated. Vraka had a thousand inhabitants, who all
trace descent from various Bosnians, Herzegovinese, and Montenegrins, [628
who in recent times fled from blood-vengeance and sheltered in 166]
Turkish territory. Far from being grateful for shelter they are a
perpetual source of trouble. They are used by the Serbs as a "jumping-off 648
ground" for complaints, and though they have their own Church 779

6/9 69

Mirdita. Since adopting Islam it has married into the two other Moslem tribes of the group, Matija and Dibra. 777 782

2. *Matija* is wholly Moslem. It had a very bad reputation when I was travelling in Albania, and was so much averse to foreigners that I did not visit it. It was about the only tribe that refused to accept blood-gelt and insisted on blood, and the more civilised tribes of Maltsia e Madhe used to say: "We are not so bad as Matija." It was notorious for constant cattle-stealing from the herds wintering on the plains and was said to consist of about twelve hundred houses. It has since come before the public, as its chief, Ahmed Zogu, with a large number of armed men at his back, aspired to rule Albania. He was expelled by the Albanians in 1924, but was returned forcibly to the country by the support of Belgrade, and it is said of other Powers, who saw in him a ready tool to assist their schemes. By first giving territory to the Serbs and then great concessions to Italy he has now put Albania into a difficulty, and she has become a bone of contention between Jugoslavia and Italy. In 1908, when all the tribes were eager for an independent Albania, no one could have foreseen its destinies would be thrown into the hands of the wildest and least educated of the tribes. [976 609] [621] [469 168]

3. *Dibra.*—This tribe, too, I found unvisitable. It had as bad a reputation as Matija, but has suffered cruelly as a result of war, for the frontier has been drawn between the Dibrani and the town of Dibra, their market. This has caused great discontent both sides of the frontier, and some fighting. A frontier under no circumstances should cut a tribe land in half—if those who draw it wish to maintain peace.

Dibra and Matija formed part of the Principality of Skender Beg in the old days. Luria belonged to Dukagini.

4. *Arnji.*—A small independent tribe on the left bank of the river Mola. It is all Moslem and an offshoot of Berisha. I was the only foreigner who had passed through it for many years, and a long debate was held before I was admitted as guest. The women all wore Mirdite dress, and I was told the tribe married mainly Mirdite women. [186 291]

PRIZREN GROUP

1. *Ljuma.*—When I knew it, this was a large and strong Moslem tribe. In 1912–13 it suffered very heavily. A Serb officer in my presence described how he and his battalion had bayonetted all the women and children in part of the tribe, because "women bear men," and laughed till he choked over his beer. The Serbs were "liberating the land from the Turkish yoke." On subsequent inquiry I learnt that some 1,400 persons had been massacred. Part of this tribe is now under Serb rule. 727 619

653 plaintiff (lord of blood) has the right to name them. Or they may be
604 named by the "bairaktar" (head of the tribe). This is only done if the
652 matter cannot be settled by con-jurors chosen by the plaintiff.

The gjaksor has the right to object to two of the con-jurors, who must be replaced by others. The con-jurors are all men of standing in the tribe ("plext," elders; "kren," heads). They examine the facts and hear the accused ("gjaksor") and decide if peace can be made and on what terms. If all twenty-four agree to take the peace oath with him he is then reckoned innocent, and he and his family do not owe any further blood, but pay blood-gelt to the zoti i gjakut. This varied from about £25 to £30. If they all agree but one, he may be replaced by two others. If still no agreement is come to, the gjaksor may bring more con-jurors, who are members of his family, up to the number of eight.

Agreement having been come to, the whole party goes into the
[782 church (or mosque) before which the council has been held. In the
628 church the candles are lighted on the altar, and in the presence of the priest the gjaksor swears his innocence. He no longer owes blood and is, therefore, innocent. Next swear those of his family who may have been summoned, and then all the con-jurors. After this the gjaksor and the zoti i gjakut frequently ratify the peace by swearing blood brotherhood (v. Blood Brotherhood).

By Moslems the oath is sworn in the mosque.

693 Each of the con-jurors has to be paid a small fee for his services. The plaintiff in some cases can thus annoy the accused by insisting upon the full number of con-jurors allowed by the law. A priest counts as twelve con-jurors, and sometimes an important elder is reckoned as two.

628 The oath being taken and the blood-gelt paid, the man is free to return to his burnt house and repair it. Being as a rule of solid stone, only the roof and woodwork need renewing. If he is a popular man, other members of the tribe help him both to pay the fine and start life again.

627 To Mgr. Miedia, now Archbishop of Scutari, I am indebted for an
642 account of how two families can make peace voluntarily without appeal to the law. Having ascertained by means of emissaries that peace will be acceptable, the gjaksor and his relations choose a feast day and enter the house of the injured family with their hands bound. A child placed the wrong way round in a cradle is carried with them. If the peace offer is accepted the lord of blood loosens their hands and puts the child straight in the cradle. The blood-gelt is then arranged and paid. This custom existed among the Dukagini.

676 The above all refers to a murder committed by one man. But it
628 may happen that several men all fire at once and kill a man. A search

for bullets is made in the body. If four men have fired and but three bullets are found, any one of them may be innocent of the death. If each can get twenty-four con-jurors to swear innocence with him, all secure acquittal. Any who cannot find twenty-four con-jurors are guilty and owe blood. If there are as many bullets as men, then all owe blood.

For killing a woman, which is a rare thing, blood may be taken. If she is unmarried, it is taken by her father's family; usually by her brother. If married, her father's family may take blood for her within the year. After that only her husband's family has the right to do so. Blood-gelt, if any, for a woman is very small. The tribe does not punish the murderer; it is purely a family affair. The death of a woman does not weaken the tribe, for she is of another blood and can easily be replaced from without; whereas a man cannot be replaced.

If a pregnant woman be killed two bloods can be claimed. Dom Kol Ashta told me that cases have occurred even in which a grave has been opened to settle the question of blood-gelt for the unborn child, and full payment claimed if it proved to be a male.

*Cases in which killing is justified and is not punishable.*—1. Blood may be taken for rape and none may be taken in return.

2. If the relatives of the man who is shot succeed in taking blood at once, shoot the murderer that day, the blood is laid and no more can be taken.

3. A woman taken in adultery may be killed along with her partner by her husband or brother, and no punishment follows. But should her husband kill her and not the man, her family can take blood for her.

In none of the above cases, I believe, does the tribe punish; nor has the tribe, at any rate in some places, the power to punish a crime committed within the "shpi" (house). When I was in Shala, at the priest's house in 1908, we heard two shots fired. Someone ran in to call the priest to a man who was dying; it was too late. In a dispute about the irrigation channels in the fields, a man had killed his own first cousin. Both were inmates of one large house. The crime excited genuine horror and was loudly discussed. Public opinion seemed to think something should be done—but what? It is the clear duty of a house to take blood as atonement for blood that has been taken. But the house, having already lost a man, cannot make matters any better by taking more of its own blood. This could not be expected; nor could any outsider interfere in what was a matter for the house lord. He could not be both lord of blood and gjaksor—could not owe himself blood. It was, in fact, an example of *patria potestas*. He decided to do nothing but hold a fine funeral to show his regret for the loss; and so sure was he that he was acting correctly that he sent a boy to the priest's

682 house to borrow sugar for the funeral feast—a request which was refused.
578 As I was the priest's guest, I could not attend the funeral; but it must have been interesting, for the murderer was one of the chief mourners—perhaps honestly so. My suggestion that he should be handed over
[592] to the Turkish authorities in Scutari for punishment was not received at all well by anyone; and it was pointed out to me that had it not
771 been the Will of God the man could not have died of only two bullets. Many men live with more in them. This curious case suggests that in earlier days the house lord may have had the power of life and death over his subjects.

### MURDER OUTSIDE THE TRIBE

682 The tribe inflicts no punishment. The Turkish Government got its
628 fine if it could. Fines, in fact, being part of the Government's revenue, no effort was made to stop blood-taking by it.

The relatives of the murdered man take blood for him, of the family of the murderer if they can. An intertribal feud may become so intense that two whole tribes are "in blood." Peace can only be established by
[627] a Council of Elders of both tribes. When made, it was sometimes strengthened by marrying the daughter of one party to a man of the
[608] other. Or blood brotherhood may be sworn. The blood-gelt, fines, and the peace oath are as already described.

### WOUNDING

683 A wound inflicted intentionally comes under the laws for blood. The house of the guilty man can be burnt and his goods can be seized (this in Dukagini), as in case of murder, if the elders examining the case think fit. He is liable to have his own blood taken by the injured man or his relatives. Blood of his son and brother may be taken (Dukagini).
[593] Con-jurors up to twenty-four may be called, but according to the nature of the injury a smaller number may suffice. The fine paid is in proportion to the wound, and is decided by the elders. The price to be paid for a death—a fatal wound—is taken as standard, and the wound reckoned as one-half, quarter, tenth, etc., of a death price. It is, in fact, payment for the amount of blood lost.

In the case of a wound given accidentally, the house is not burnt, but the wound must be paid for. A man I knew, playing with a rifle, accidentally shot a woman through the foot and, unfortunately, made her lame for life. He had to pay fifteen napoleons to her husband (for damaging his property), and had to undertake to pay a further fifteen should the woman die at any future time as a result of lameness.

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[501]
banks of the Drin to shoot another lad with whose family he was in blood, and who was due to cross the river on the usual inflated sheep-skins. Drin ran swiftly, the sheep-skin float broke loose. Soon the foe was struggling for life in the torrent. The blood-seeker threw aside his rifle, dashed into the torrent and saved his foe at the risk of his own life. They then and there swore brotherhood and the feud ceased. This episode goes to prove that blood-taking is not vengeance. The drowning of the foe would have in no way settled the feud, for expiatory blood would not have been taken.

608 The old bairaktar of Nikaj heard that I was sister to the King of England and believed a blood alliance with me would be for the good of the tribe. The priest at whose house I was, however, laughed at him uproariously and he was hurt; so I never took part in the ritual.

In Albanian this brotherhood is called "Vllam" or "Vlla me Tenzone" (brother in God). It is also very commonly called "probotin" or "probo," an obvious corruption of the Serb "pobratim." "Birazel" (? Turkish) was, I was told, used also by the Moslems.

The custom extends all over Albania, but of the South I have no details.

## SERBS AND MONTENEGRINS

[illegible] In Montenegro I was often assured that the custom was extinct, and I never came across a case. But it possibly still lingered in out-of-the-way places. People who wished to appear "civilized" in Montenegro were very apt to deny the existence of customs they thought would be despised. But it was admitted that "pobratimstvo" had but recently died out. Medakovitch in 1860 mentions it as prevalent.

The Orthodox Church, both in Serbia and Montenegro, adopted this pagan custom and tried to "Christianize" it.

Two forms of pobratimstvo were known:—

1. "Probratimstvo prichestno" (communion pobratimstvo). "Prichest" is the word for the Holy Communion. It was not, however, a case of the two parties taking the Communion together, but a special ceremony. In the Orthodox Church, when the people receive the Communion, the Host is put into the consecrated wine. The pope takes a portion of the soaked bread in a special spoon and gives it to the communicant. The ritual for pobratimstvo, so far as I could learn, was as follows: The two parties went together to church. The pope read a prayer. The two then took a large goblet full of wine, and both, setting their lips to it, sipped at once. They then broke bread and each ate a piece. They sipped and ate together thus three times and then kissed the cross, the Gospels, and the ikon, and lastly each other. It is a curious

[P157-190 blank]

583 work to do again. No one thought it unreasonable, and the wedding was postponed till she had finished. I created great horror by saying it would be better to find another man to fit the already made garments.

All the gifts exchanged are keenly scrutinized, and the respective families argue as to whether they have been properly treated.

582 *Forbidden Degrees.*—Among the Catholics, of course, the usual laws have to be observed. But the people maintain far more rigid ones of their own. As we have shown in the chapter on tribes, no couple tracing origin from the same male ancestor, no matter how remote, is marriageable in North Albania, whether they be Christian or Moslem. Neither are those related by "hair-cutting" or by "sworn brotherhood" marriageable.

Priests cannot refuse to marry such if there be no other impediment, but I was assured it was very rarely they were asked to do so. Though I made many inquiries, I heard of but one case of a priest being asked to marry a couple with a remote common ancestor. Being an Albanian
684 tribesman, he thought it very repulsive, but as the pair had cohabited, he
183 consented; nor by Church law could he have refused. The bridegroom was shot soon afterwards by the outraged relatives.

### 3. The Levirate

587 On one point the tribesman came into severe collision with the
688 Church. He considered it his bounden duty to marry the widow, not only of his brother, but of any male of the house, except his father. In Maltsia e Madhe this custom had died out, and blood-feud arose
[628] between Hoti and Kastrati because a case had occurred, and the Hoti considered their honour blackened. But among the Catholic Dukagini the custom, in spite of most strenuous efforts of the Church, was still common. Among the Moslem tribes and among the Moslems of Scutari I was assured it was almost universal.

[577] From the tribesman's point of view the position was this: A widow left with young children must remain in the family house and rear them. If they are daughters, she can be returned to her own people when they are old enough not to need her. If there is a son, she has the right to live in the house permanently, but she cannot marry outside the house, as no strange man can be brought into it. It would be cruel to condemn a young woman to celibacy; it would not be honourable. Therefore, even though her brothers-in-law were already married by the rites of the Church, one or other of them must take her as wife. The priest in vain called it concubinage. The man said she was his legal wife and his legal wife agreed with the arrangement.

antar, redden their lips and cheeks with iris powder 302
or carmine, and stain their nails and the palms of
their hands with henna.

The social status of the Albanian women varies 562
according to district and creed. The Liaps and the
Christians of Southern Albania and Epirus generally
occupy the least enviable position, all the hard out- [462]
of-door work devolving upon them. The Northern
Albanians and also the Tosks, on the other hand, treat
their wives with much greater consideration, consult
them willingly in their affairs, both public and private,
and accord them a position in the family almost
equal to their own. And well do they merit
the respect of their husbands and brothers. For
often have they proved themselves to be fit com-
panions for men, unmindful of fatigue, danger, and
even death in the cause of liberty. When the
armies of the Sultan menaced the privileges of which
the people of Scutari had always been proud, it was
the women who were the first to give the alarm and
to excite the men to resist to the death, themselves
following to aid in the combat. Restraining the [703]
tears natural to their sex, they would carry the
mutilated bodies of their loved ones among the com-
batants in order to excite them to avenge their deaths.
And the same women are said to have refused to
receive back into their homes the husbands and sons
who had for a moment turned their backs upon the
enemy.

Albanian women, too, are often entrusted with 562
negotiations for truce or peace. Such is the respect 628
with which Albanians regard their women that they 728

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

562 may traverse the camps of belligerents with greater
628 safety than men. The terms of treaties of peace, too,
728 are often discussed by the women belonging to the hostile parties in the privacy of the harems of the chieftains. More ready, however, as a rule, are they to espouse and take part in the quarrels of their male relatives than to act as peacemakers, and, owing to their practice of carrying arms, they are always ready for a fray. Miss Mackenzie relates that, when traversing the Pass of Katchanik, her attention was directed by her escort to two Albanian women whom they chanced to meet. "Look at them," he cried, "they are women worth looking at, for well do they know how to handle a gun!"

"Are they Moslems?" asked the traveller.

"Assuredly."

"But they do not wear the yashmak."

"Not they, indeed," was the reply. "They have never worn it, and why should they? for they are fiercer and more unapproachable than men."*

154 Such being the character of the Albanian women,
175 it is not surprising that they have played a con-
562 siderable part in the history of their country. It was, indeed, to the indomitable energy and courageous spirit of his mother, Khamko, that Ali Pasha, the "Lion of Ioannina," owed the earlier successes that paved the way for his subsequent brilliant career. Ali, who had during his father's lifetime been a wild and intractable boy, appears at his death to have submitted with the utmost docility to the authority of his mother. This lady, who was the daughter of a

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* *Through Macedonia to the Albanian Lakes.*

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

Bey of Konitza, and connected with some of the best 159
Tosk families, had not, until the death of her husband 175
placed the responsibility for the well-being of the 562
family in her hands, given any signs of the extraordinary strength of character and readiness of resource which afterwards distinguished her, qualities which were, however, sullied by an implacability of soul which only too nearly resembled that displayed by Olympias, the mother of Alexander, herself a native of Epirus.

"To my mother," said the tyrant of Ioannina on one occasion to the French Consul-General—"to my mother I owe everything, for my father left me but a mere hole (τρύπα) and a few fields. My imagination, fired by the counsels of her who had twice given me birth—for she has made me both a *man* and a *vizier*—revealed to me the secret of my destiny."[1] The 159
hereditary enemies of the family having at once taken 175
advantage of its head being a minor, by seizing upon 562
some of his lands, Khamko suddenly exchanged the 628
distaff for the sword, and gathering round her the partisans of her house, and those among her late husband's vassals who still remained faithful, tried in various skirmishes her strength against that of the enemies of her family. In these raids she was accompanied by her young son, to whom she pointed out the lands of which he had been despoiled, and the estates of the despoilers. Braving every danger, the *[illegible]*, as Khamko was called by her followers, continued to harass her enemies by open hostility or secret intrigue until she was finally taken in an

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[1] See pp. [illegible] and 319, *Note*.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

159 ambuscade by the men of Gardiki and Tchormovo,
175 together with Ali and her only daughter, Shainitza.
562 After having been subjected to every indignity and
● 628 outrage by their captors, Khamko and her children had
the good fortune to be ransomed by the generosity of a
Greek merchant for the sum of 22,800 piastres (£3700).

Hatred of those who had thus humiliated her took entire possession of the Aghadina's soul, and her one idea thenceforward was to train up her son as the avenger of her wrongs. With this object she commenced to instil into his mind those pernicious principles which he was only too well disposed to receive, and which may be summed up in the words
[577] *Might is right*, an adage sufficiently popular among the turbulent Albanian clans. Ali's first attempt to vindicate his rights in the field was a complete failure. Having met with a more vigorous resistance than he expected, he fled from the fight, and was one of the first to re-enter Tepeleni. Khamko, furious at finding all her hopes blasted by what she deemed his cowardice, loaded him with reproaches, and thrusting her distaff into his hand, added, "Go, coward, and spin with the women in the harem; thou art fitter for that than for the career of arms!" Ali's fortunes indeed fluctuated for some time between success and failure. While he was absent on a campaign, Khamko found herself on her death-bed, and, though repeated and urgent messages were despatched to him, she died before he could arrive. The Aghadina in her will bequeathed to her son and daughter the task of immolating to her *manes* the inhabitants of Gardiki and
[789] Tchormovo, at whose hands they had suffered such

159
unpardonable indignities, and over her dead body 175
the brother and sister swore to utterly exterminate 562
her enemies. 628 ●

Some years later Shainitza was grieving for the 788
death of her favourite son, Aden Bey. So wild was 159
her sorrow that she smashed with a hammer all his and 175
her own diamond ornaments, burnt all her cashmeres 152
and valuable furs, and forced his young widow to lie on straw mats spread on the ground instead of on a bed. The mirrors and ornaments of her serail were also destroyed, its windows were by her order painted black,[1] and everything which in any way recalled joy or happiness was banished from the palace. Roused from this abandonment of grief by the news of the fall of Gardiki,[2] she wrote to Ali reminding [788]
him of the oath they had sworn together over their mother's corpse, and of her wrongs and theirs, and urged him to have no mercy on the inhabitants of that town. "As for me," she added in conclusion, "it is only on cushions stuffed with the hair of the women of Gardiki that Shainitza will henceforward repose!"

Faithfully was the terrible oath, sworn to the dead, 175
kept both by brother and sister. The chief men of 159
Gardiki, to the number of some three hundred, in- 669
duced by fair promises to meet Ali at the Khan of Valieré, were there ruthlessly massacred by the Christian troops under his Greek lieutenant, Thanasé

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[1] See p. 265; and compare similar custom in folk-tale, p. 313.

[2] In 1812. A Greek folk-song graphically describes the gallant defence made by this town, which was taken by one of Ali's lieutenants, "Youssouf the Arab" (*Greek Folk-songs*, p. 232).

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

159 175 562 ing he had killed her, and overcome with grief and remorse, shut himself up in his most private apartments until he was informed by his physician that Emineh was not even wounded, but had merely fainted from emotion. His mind thus relieved, Ali shed tears, and, with all his tenderness for his favourite wife revived, proceeded to her apartment. Admittance being from fear refused him, he entered the chamber by force. The noise, however, and the sight of the tyrant, gave to the tender Emineh a shock which proved fatal, and she expired during the night in a state of delirium.

The death of Emineh was a terrible shock also to her murderer. Her memory perpetually haunted him, whether at the festal board or in the council chamber, and, above all, in the silent watches of the night. He feared to be left alone, and was frequently heard by his pages to start up, and exclaim: "Emineh! it is she!—it is she! Save me from her vengeance!" Years later, when the Dervish Sheikh, Youssouf, while boldly reproving the Vizier for his crimes and cruelties, pointed out from the window the tomb of the murdered Emineh, he was interrupted by Ali, who exclaimed with tears: "Stop, stop, my father! Thou hast named the name of Emineh; overwhelm me not with the weight of thy maledictions!"

628 578 An account of the Albanian women would hardly be complete without some mention of the terrible blood-feuds (*Ram de Ghiak*), which, though often originating in the most trifling causes, result in great loss of life, and are frequently handed down from generation to generation. Sometimes these feuds

628 578 exist between individuals or families only; at others, whole villages, or clans, are concerned in them. In carrying them on, however, certain traditional rules are punctiliously adhered to, and occasionally those concerned, finding the state of continual hostility irksome, agree to a *besa*, or truce, for a fixed period. When entire clans take part in the feud, each keeps strictly to its own wells or fountains, its public ovens and its markets. Such dissensions, however, rarely interrupt the usual occupation of a district, the land being tilled and the flocks pastured as usual in the daytime, the combatants assembling for the fray at evening on the common or in the market-place of the town or village. When a few men have bitten the dust, the hostile parties withdraw, in order to bury the dead, and the battle is over for the time.

628 562 578 Though women are not the principals in these vendetta, it is no uncommon thing for them to take part in the bloody frays to which they give rise, and for which their custom of carrying arms makes them always ready. Mrs. Blunt describes[1] a combat of this description which took place in the neighbourhood of Uskup (Skopia), the cause of contention being merely a hare, to which two sportsmen laid equal claim. As neither would give in, it was decided that the case should be tried by combat on the village green. The duel, however, soon became a general *mêlée*, relatives and friends joining the principals, and women fighting by the side of their husbands and brothers. One girl of seventeen, the sister of one of the sportsmen, fought, it is said, with a desperation and success

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[1] *The People of Turkey*, vol. i. p. 80.

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562 worthy of a better cause, and fourteen victims fell,
578 thus perpetuating the feud among the survivors.

On another occasion the breaking of a girl's pitcher at the fountain by two mischievous boys resulted in such a desperate contest between her friends and theirs that some sixty persons fell in the fight. It is said, however, that even on such occasions as these
562 the men refrain, as far as possible, from striking or
577 wounding the women, for the Albanian code of
484 honour makes it impossible to attack a woman, whether armed or unarmed. The sacredness attached to their persons extends also to those whom they take under their protection. Escorted by a girl only, travellers may safely pass through the wildest parts of the country, and a man may cross, without fear, the lands of one with whom he is at feud, if he have the safe-conduct of a woman belonging to his enemy's family.

577 To such an extent is respect for women carried by
562 the Albanians, that it is contrary to their notions of
522 propriety ever to make women the subject of jokes or humorous stories. Insult or annoyance offered to a
578 girl, or carrying off one without the consent of her
562 parents, almost invariably results in bitter feuds between families, or fierce battles between tribes. As with most mountain people, the moral code is with the Skipetars exceedingly strict. Among many of
684 the tribes any lapse from virtue on the part of a woman is punished with death, a subsequent marriage not being allowed to condone the fault. The penalty of adultery is of equally Draconic severity. The unfaithful wife is placed up to her shoulders in a pit, and

If, however, she returns home and marries into another 587 family, her father pays to her first husband's heirs, or to her son if she have one, half the dowry promised at her second betrothal. With the exception of her deceased husband's brother, a woman may not re-marry in the same village without the consent of his relatives. In the mountains of Pulati this is [628] ● never given, and a vendetta follows if it is dispensed with. If the betrothed man die, his brother has also the right to marry the betrothed maiden, but must pay to her parents, in addition to the dowry already promised, a hundred and fifty piastres.

An Albanian has the right to beat his wife if she 593 misconducts herself, but this right is little exercised except among the Liaps, who are the rudest and most brutal of all Albanians. He must, however, be careful not to draw blood even in the most trifling degree, for, if a wife receives a mere scratch in the course of a castigation, she complains to her parents, who cite the husband before the authorities. The penalty [681] consists chiefly in the payment of a considerable fine, which becomes the private property of the woman abused.

Divorce is not uncommon among the Moslem Al- 586 banians, who follow in this respect the customs of the [171] Ottomans, the husband paying to the discarded wife the sum specified in the marriage contract in view of such a contingency. The divorce generally takes place at the instance of the husband, but the wife may also claim it for a limited number of reasons. If, for instance, a man has left his native town or village, and does not return within the period fixed by the

748 riddled with balls. The tribe of the Schialla, having heard of this insult to their religion, prepared to take vengeance for it; but, the offenders being out of reach, they made the family of Bobi, to which the bride belonged, responsible. The Bobi engaged to obtain satisfaction within a week, or pay the penalty, and on the morrow the young men of the family set off for Bugna, where they killed two nephews of Tahir Mala. Not content, however, with this retribution, they entered the mosque, where they killed a pig, rubbed the doors with its blood, and placed the head on the ledge of the pulpit.

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The Moslems, at this profanation of their mosque, hastened to complain to Mustapha Pasha, of Skodra, who prepared to send a military expedition against the Bobi. The latter, with the rest of the Schialla tribe, placed themselves under the protection of the Miridite Prince, Prenk Doda, who threatened the Pasha that, if troops were sent against the Schialla, he would not only support them, but call all the Christian highlanders to arms. The Pasha, alarmed at the prospect of a religious war for which he would be held responsible, then agreed to let the insulted cross atone for the polluted mosque, and cry quits with the Christians.

745 The number of Albanians affiliated to the Bektashi Order of Dervishes is said to be no fewer than 80,000. The lax observance of even the outward forms of Islam, characteristic of the followers of Hadji Bektash generally, is more especially observable in the conduct of the Skipetars, and has occasionally subjected them to persecution from their Osmanli Moslem neigh-

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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also made use of by the Albanian highlanders 778 generally, when settling matters of importance. According to this writer, quoting from M. Ampère,[1] [171] a similar custom also existed among the ancient Romans. Sylla, on leaving Rome to fight against Mithridates, required Cinna to swear, not by the national divinities, but on the Sacred Stone, and according to an ancient rite of the Etruscans, to make no innovations during his absence. Cinna, when pronouncing this oath, placed the stone on his shoulder, and then threw it backwards, while he pronounced, in a loud voice, the curses which should fall upon him were he false to his promise. The taking [627] of this oath in Albania is attended with the same ceremonies. It is sworn by the elders of the *phara*, or [628] clans, on the occasion of settling serious disputes, such as those concerning the boundaries of village lands, or other communal matters. The elders of the two tribes, Christian or Moslem, after taking the Oath of the Stone, assemble in council and settle the question at issue.

This oath, in another form, also enters into everyday speech. In course of conversation, when a Gheg wishes to emphasise what he is saying, he takes up in his hand, or points to, the nearest stone, saying, "By this weight" (*Per ket pésh*), and a Tosk makes use of the phrase, "By the heaviness of this stone" (*Per te rend te keti gùr*).[2]

The Supernals, with which the Albanian women 776 terrify themselves and their children, appear to be, for the most part, like those of the Bulgarians,

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[1] *Histoire des Romains à Rome.*

[2] Wassa Effendi, *Op. cit.*

The *Ghiak*, the terrible blood feud, or vendetta, 775
before alluded to, may possibly, as suggested by Wassa 628
Effendi, have been in its origin a sacrifice to the manes
of murdered relatives. As the numerous class of
vampire stories tends to show, the ancient belief that
those who have died by violence cannot rest quietly
in their graves still survives, and the slaying of their
murderer, or at least of one of his kindred or clan,
would thus be rather an act of religious duty towards
the dead than of vengeance on the part of the living.

The majority of the ailments which afflict mankind 753
are believed by the Albanians to be caused by magical
influences, and I shall now proceed to give some
illustrations of their folk-remedies. These are usually 755
accompanied by some form of incantation, the secret
of which is possessed only by some wise-woman who
has inherited it from her mother, and who, in her turn,
imparts it to her daughter. If, for instance, a person
believes himself to have received a blow from one of
the invisible Vilas, or some other supernal being, he [753]
has recourse to the witch-wife, who, after dressing the [776]
patient in white garments, conducts him to an uninhabited house in a retired situation. On arriving, she greets the mysterious powers whom she believes to be invisibly present. She then places her patient in a suppliant posture, gives him rose-water to drink, and both observe a solemn silence for some ten minutes, during which she makes certain mysterious signs and motions. After wishing the Vilas good-night, the witch-wife leads her patient home by a circuitous road.

Sometimes a circle is drawn round a person so afflicted,

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blue haze; above us were forested slopes, and 000
above them sheer, great cliffs throwing shadows across a dozen valleys. Our small grassy knoll was white with daisies and with fallen petals from a blossoming apple tree that arched above the cross. On it our men lay at ease, beautiful, graceful animals, their rifles swung from their shoulders and laid ready to their hands.

"Why are Shala and Shoshi in blood?" Frances 628
asked, casually, biting idly at the stem of a 576
daisy. Perolli did not know; he had gathered only the fact that there was a feud.

"Do we go through both tribes?" I wanted to know.

"Through Shala. Shoshi's farther down the river. We'll go around it."

"Are our men Shala or Shoshi?"

Perolli glanced at them. "Shala, by the pattern of the braiding on their trousers. So we won't have any troub—— Hello! That's a Shoshi man coming up the trail, now."

It was Alex who acted quickest. She was sitting on a rock beside me, her arms clasped about her knees; she rose instantly and, flinging out a hand in the gesture of greeting, cried in her most feminine voice those Albanian words that sound like, "Tune yet yetta!" and mean, "May you live long!"

The Shoshi man's hand was on his rifle, but his step had not faltered. He replied, coming on steadily, and the appropriateness of the greeting struck me, for if it had not been uttered by a

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## PEAKS OF SHALA

[628] woman he would at that moment have been
576 dead. Our Shala men, with perfect courtesy, went through the formalities of greeting on the trail, and this is the form, translated to me by Rexh:

"Long life to you!"

"And to you, long life!"

"How could you?" meaning, "How could you get here?"

"Slowly, slowly, little by little."

No one who has ever seen those trails can doubt it.

291. The Shoshi man sat down, our men offered him cigarettes, and up the trail came a woman of Shoshi[1] She wore a tight, bell-shaped skirt of horizontal black and white stripes, made of cloth heavier and thicker than felt, the twelve-inch-wide marriage belt of heavy leather studded with pounds of nails, and a jacket covered with three-inch-thick fringe. Two heavy braids of black hair hung forward on her breasts, a colored handkerchief was bound around her head, and her face, smoothly weather browned, large eyed, delicately shaped, was the most beautiful that I
[854] had ever seen. On her back, held by woven woolen straps that crossed between her breasts, was a cradle tightly covered by a thick blanket;
[283] in one hand she held a bunch of raw wool, and from the other dangled a whirling spindle. Her feet were bare, and as she came up that trail which had exhausted me she sang softly to herself, dexterously spinning thread from the bunch of wool.

[1] [Albanian Mountain tribe -- [18] Analysis]

ooo room, furnished by a mattress laid on a raised platform of boards. Our saddlebags and blankets had been piled on the rough wooden floor, and Kexh held the torch while the bishop's servant poured cold water from a wooden bucket over our hands. Then he offered us a beautifully hand-woven towel of red-and-white striped linen, and when we had dried our hands he led us down a stone stairway, through a kitchen crowded with villagers, where an old woman tended cooking pots over a fire built on the earthen floor, and into the dining room.

There was a long, rude table covered with hand-woven linen, rough benches on each side of it. The bishop sat at its head, on a stool, and served the soup. The Franciscan brother and a meek little priest in black sat humbly near the foot of the table, and did not speak. There was nothing in the stone-floored, plaster-walled room except the table, the benches, and a rain-stained photograph on the discolored wall—a picture of a gathering of Albanian priests, taken many years ago in Tirana.

628 619 "The feud between Shala and Shosh[1] looks very bad," said the bishop[2]. "I fear there will be many deaths. We do what we can to prevent it, all the authority of the Church is used against these feuds, but——" He shrugged his shoulders. "It is their way of enforcing their law, the Law of Lec, which has come down to them from prehistoric times. And the Albanians are very tenacious of their own customs."

[1] [Albanian Mountain tribes -- [88] Analyst]
[2] [Bishop of Pulti -- Analyst]

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He filled our glasses with red wine. "You must not mistake my people," he said. "The blood feud is bad, very bad, but it is their only way of enforcing laws, which are, in general, admirable. 623 6/9

"The blood feud is not a lawless thing, as strangers sometimes think. Nor has it anything to do with personal strife or hate. It is a form of capital punishment, such as all nations have, and it is governed by most strict laws.

"You must remember that in these mountains we have never been conquered by foreign governments. The Roman Empire claimed to have overpowered Albania, it is true, as later the Turks did, but neither Rome nor Constantinople was able to send its government into these mountains. The people live as they did before the days of Greece, except for the influence of the Church. It is a simple, communistic society, [9] without private property or any organized government. The only law is the moral law, enforced by tradition, by custom, and by common consent. The father of the family becomes the chief of the tribe, but he has no power that conflicts with the moral law, the ancient Law of Lec. There is a tradition that all this group of tribes [10] was once, long ago, given this moral law by a man named Lec, but that is doubtless a myth added to through the ages.

"This Law of Lec is based on personal honor, which is also the honor of the tribe. A man or a tribe must punish an insult to honor by killing

626 the man who has given it. Thus, if a member of
619 a tribe is killed unjustly by a man of another tribe; if a woman is stolen or injured or affronted; if any part of the tribal property is stolen; if a man or a tribe fails to keep a *besa* (a word of honor) in a matter of land or war or marriage or
[3/2] irrigation—you will find excellent and admirable irrigation systems here—then the crime is punished by death. But if these crimes are committed against a member of the same tribe, then the house of the guilty man is burned, and he is cast off by the tribe and must go into the wilderness and live alone.

"You will see this law working out in the case of Shala and Shoshi. Last week a Shala man crossing the lands of Shoshi—the two tribes having some time ago sworn a *besa* that they would keep the peace between them—saw a woman of Shoshi on the trail. He said to himself that he would like that woman for his son, who was unmarried, though of marriageable age, because his betrothed had died in childhood. So the man of Shala took the woman of Shoshi to his house for his son, and there she is now.

"Apparently," said the bishop, dryly, "she did not make any outcry, for her husband was in their house only a few yards away, and it is a question whether she and the son had not previously arranged the abduction. However, the husband was, of course, obliged to avenge his honor, and he went at once to the heights above Shala and shot the son. This was, according to the Law, an unjustifiable murder, since he should 628 have killed the father who was the abductor. 619 Therefore the father waited on the trail above Shoshi and shot the husband.

"It should have stopped there, but Shoshi's honor is involved as long as a woman of the tribe is held unlawfully in the hands of Shala. So a hot-tempered Shoshi man has shot a man of Shala and it has become a blood feud between the two tribes. As the woman was born in Pultit, some say that Pultit's honor is also involved. So you see that the affair becomes complicated; I have been told by wise men that no less than sixteen deaths will wipe out the insults on both sides. You perhaps heard telephoning about it as you came in? The mountain sides have been ringing with it. But what can one do? Excommunication, of course. At every mass I tell my people that the anger of the Church will descend on all who take part in the killings, but the Law of Lec holds them, and it is, after all, their only civil law."

It took time to tell this, what with filling the 000 glasses, serving the food platters of delicious stewed rabbit and bowls of macaroni, a dish the bishop had grown fond of in Rome—and then there were the cups of syrupy Turkish coffee to be ceremoniously served and drunk, and for hours, struggling with an agony of sleepiness, we 574 had implored Perolli in English to make our excuses and let us go to bed, he refusing sternly, since it is the most terrible breach of mountain

hospitality for a guest to go asleep as early as midnight.

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empires, discover America, and invent machines, 000 became as faint to us as the old memory of a dream. By the next day we had forgotten it all; two weeks later I was to come back to a room with a rug on the floor, a window in the wall, a bed, and a stove, and feel such a sense of strangeness among them that, tired as I was, I could not sleep between the unfamiliar sheets. Now that I am back in my own century, writing of those days in the Albanian mountains, I understand why men so easily slip into the ancient savagery of war and all war's atrocities. All that we call civilization is like a tune heard yesterday, a little thing floating on the surface of our minds, which sometimes we can keep step to, and then in a moment it is gone so that we cannot remember it.

Upon the trail that day we were barbarians, 628 simple and primitive; we were isolated, small bits of warmth and energy in a hostile universe of stone and rain. And when, out of the gray mist of the trail ahead, another simple barbarian appeared, we greeted him with the unquestioning acceptance of understanding. He was a man of Pultit, bare in the rain save for turban, loin cloth, and opangi. He was bound for the house of the bishop to bring back the boy Sokol, whose father was dead.

Standing around him in the rain, we listened to the news. Three days earlier Plum had sheltered a woman who was leaving a cruel husband, a man of Shoshi. She had slept beneath Plum's roof one night on her way to her father's tribe.

[See cat. 116, pp. 36-37 -- Analyst]

628 That morning, as Plum returned after taking his son to school, he had met the husband on the trail, and without a word the husband had shot him down. But as he died Plum had managed to reach his revolver and had killed the husband, saying, "This, from Sokol." And as Sokol was now the head of his family, he must return from school to the house where the women were mourning his father.

Cheremi thrice made the sign of the cross. "Plum was a good man," he said.

"And loved his son," Perolli added. For Plum with his last effort had avenged himself, had closed the account. He left no blood feud to darken the life of the little Eagle. The boy would be known as the son of a hero, and to-day would take his place as a chief and a member of all village councils.

600 The man of Pultit, having told us this news and wished us long life and smooth trails for our feet, went on down the mountain side, and gripping our staffs tighter in water-soaked hands, we resumed our climbing.

We had begun that day with ponchos over our sweaters; our gendarmes had begun it by taking off their jackets and trousers, so that the sluicing rain would not wet them. These garments were in the packs, protected by ponchos, and, barelegged, barearmed, with only the colored sashes about their waists and cloths wound around their heads, the men went up and down the interminable trails as easily as panthers. Now and

600 with four strangers from far away and with a Mohammedan youth of Scutari. To-night Cheremi will be in Plani. I will say to Lulash that he may bring to Cheremi in Plani the hundred kronen which he owes him."

"Oo-EE-oo-oo!" The final shrill call came circling back among the peaks like ripples of disturbed water, and up through its circling came [570] the answering call of the woman. Since he had been telephoning to a woman, Cheremi did not fire his rifle three times, for which my ears were grateful.

We went on. And once, as I clambered up the side of a rock pile that the child of a giant might have made in building a tower with blocks, my staff (ah, how grateful I was for that third leg!) dislodged a stone the size of my head, and Cheremi, turning like a cat, flung himself downward and caught it as it tottered on the trail's edge. Then I looked and saw, far below, the miniature images of a woman and a cradle, set among moving white spots that were sheep, and I saw that the rock would have gone down the slope like a bomb from an airplane and struck the cradle beside which the woman was sitting, and, I thought, spinning.

628 "One must be careful on the trails," said Cheremi, and as the men at that moment had finished a song with a joyous fusillade of rifle shots, I asked if people were not sometimes killed by stray bullets. Perolli said that of course it happened now and then, but everyone under-

stood that the killing was an accident and it 628
caused no blood feud. Accidents, he remarked, will happen anywhere, and he spoke of the death toll of automobiles, which at that moment seemed as far from my knowledge as the twenty centuries that separated us from them.

"Through the Land of the Eagle the news is 533
sung," the second gendarme began a new song, 126
thumbs against his ears and sixty-pound pack on his back, as he ascended the rocks above us. Cheremi took it up, repeating each line as the other improvised it, and under his breath Rexh translated them for me, storing them away in his memory, from which I later transferred them to my notebook. As I listened I glanced at Rrok Perolli, disguised servant of the new government about which they were making the song, but his face wore a cheerful and unconcerned expression, like a mask so perfect that it seems real.

"Through the Land of the Eagle the news is sung—— (It has a double rhyme as they sing it, Mrs. Lane, but I do not know the English to make it rhyme in your language)," said Rexh, apologetically.

"What have the men of Tirana been doing?
I am a son of the mountain eagles;
I do not give up my nest while there is life in my claws;
I do not yield to the gendarmes!
I will drown them in their own blood.
Rise, rise, and go to the door.
There is a sergeant with twenty soldiers.

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forever to the little feet that brought you to Thethis!"

The little feet were wearing at that moment two pairs of wrinkled, thick woolen stockings, indescribably ludicrous beneath the flapping legs of trousers around which I had not rewound the soaked woolen leggings, and Perolli and I were helpless with laughter as soon as the door had closed behind Lulash.

"How am I ever going to get to his house?" I asked, wiping my eyes.

"Oh, we'll have somebody make you some goatskin opangi," said Perolli. "He won't expect us very soon." He flung out his arms in a jubilant gesture. "A *besa* of peace from Shala!" he exclaimed. "I couldn't have hoped for that! It means peace through the whole north; it means internal security for northern Albania—if I can only get the other tribes to join it."

Frances and Alex came in, desperately anxious to know what had happened, and we three did a dance of pure delight. It was an inexpressible relief to know that Perolli would get out of Shala alive, and the *besa* was almost too much.

"But, Perolli," said Frances, when I had told 837
the whole conversation, "do you mean to say 628
that these people are—are absolutely moral? I 69
mean, as we understand morality? No love making along all these mountain trails? No illegitimate children? Never?"

"Never? Well, I have heard of one case," said Perolli. "But don't forget that such a

537 thing would mean a blood feud between tribes.
626 No man would make love to a girl of his own
619 tribe, of course; a tribe traces its ancestry back to a common ancestor, and it would be like an American's making love to his own sister. And if he seduced a girl of another tribe he would be involving hundreds of people. Men have to respect women in these mountains; they're killed if they don't, and not only they, but their families. A blood feud is no joke.

"However, I did hear of its happening once. The man's family had to send word to the family of the girl to whom he was betrothed, to say that he could not marry her because he was going to have a child by another woman. The three tribes met in council and prevented a blood feud, but the man's family had to pay his fiancée's tribe ten thousand kronen, and ten thousand kronen to the family of the man that the other girl was engaged to. Then those two married, and the first man married the girl who was going to have his child. But it was a terrible disgrace to both their families.

But he cut short our awed admiration for such a rigidly moral community. He was a man of Ipek, educated in Europe, and returned to Tirana, and his attitude to the ignorant tribes of these mountains was not one of admiration.

584 "They are really a wretched lot," he declared.
627 "Now, take a thing like this, for instance." And he told us that in a house a few miles down the valley there was a nine-year-old girl held prisoner. The story was this:

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# PEAKS OF SHALA

He had put on his turban; below its white folds 000 the silver chain dangled on his bare breast; above it the muzzle of his rifle caught a glint of the western sunlight.

"He says it is not a question of your safety; 628 it is a question of his honor. I was right, Mrs. 577 Lane; he says that he is in blood with the tribes through which one goes to Scutari. If he travels through them by night he will be killed, and in the darkness no one will know who has done it. He does not mind being killed, but to be killed by some one his tribe cannot know and kill afterward would be black dishonor to him. It is true, Mrs. Lane, and he is a great byraktor—the byraktor of five hundred houses."

"But he need not go with me. You and the Shala man will go with me. I only want his mule. Is he afraid for his mule? I will give him a paper, and if I am killed and the mule is stolen he can get another mule from the Red Cross house in Scutari."

I said this quite innocently, but the words taught me what blazing eyes are. One hears of them; one seldom sees them. But the byraktor's eyes seemed actually to kindle into flame, and involuntarily I shrank back when he turned them on me.

"He does not think of the mule, Mrs. Lane. He thinks only of his honor. You must not say such things. He says you cannot go on without him; you are traveling under his protection, and it is his honor that is concerned if anything happens to you."

7/h [Shoshi warchief and [871] author's guide to Scutari -- analyst]

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## PEAKS OF SHALA

577 628 I looked at the ring of utterly savage-looking men, half naked, with shaven heads and scalplocks, surrounding me in those wild mountains, and suddenly I struggled not to laugh. If a magic vision could have shown me then to my friends at home, how they would have prayed that I escape alive, while the real difficulty was that these savages wanted only too embarrassingly to protect me.

"But, Rexh, it is absurd. I did not ask for his protection; I simply hired his mule. Tell him that he has brought me so far safely, so far I have traveled under his protection. I thank him, I thank him deeply, I am most grateful with my whole heart, but now I will leave his protection and travel onward." And to Rexh's words, with my hand on my heart, I added in Albanian, "I thank you from my heart."

The byraktor made a gesture, only a little gesture with his hand, but the violence of its fury I cannot describe. "You thank me! You have broken my honor!" he said, and even without Rexh's murmured translation I would have felt the menace of the silence that followed.

"But," I said, bewildered, "I am traveling with the Shala[1/A] man. Isn't the Shala man protection? Besides, tell him I don't need protection. I am protected even here by the power of my own tribe."

"The Shala man shall take you in, Mrs. Lane," said Rexh. That too-handsome youth had hung back from the conversation, but Rexh's stern

[1/A] [Shala tribe is in blood feud with Shoshi tribe -- Analyst]

eye brought him into it. And then there was 577
such a battle of words that the very rocks joined 621
it. The byraktor stood listening, bending down a little, intent; Rexh—short, pudgy Rexh in his flannelette pajamas—drove home with fist on chubby fist his earnest words, and the Shala man called Heaven and the cliffs to witness his clamor. The byraktor turned his eyes from Rexh to the Shala man, from the Shala man to Rexh, and thoughtfully stroked his chin. Around us the other men stood attentive.

Then the Shala man turned and, lifting me from the trail to which I had dismounted, swung me again into the saddle. He pounded the saddle with his fist and exclaimed violently, his face congested with dark blood.

"It is all right, Mrs. Lane," said Rexh, grimly. "He will take you in. He has told the byraktor why he cannot take you to Scutari; it is because the gendarmes are looking for him to kill him. But he will take you in. After that the gendarmes can have him; he is of no use."

Even my fixed idea was shaken by those astounding, calm words.

"But, Rexh," I said, in horror, "I can't kill a man, even to get to Scutari to-night. Do you think the gendarmes will really kill him if he takes me in?" But one glance at the violently miserable Shala man answered the question.

"Yes, Mrs. Lane," said Rexh. "They will kill him by law, because he has killed some men. But, Mrs. Lane, he said he would take you to

577 Scutari and he must take you to Scutari. The
623 byraktor will tell you so."

"*Po, po,*" said the byraktor, agreeing, and, "*Po, po,*" said the others; and looking at the Shala man, I had no doubt that if he faltered on the way Rexh's tongue had barbs to drive him onward.

"But explain to the byraktor that it is not American custom—that I can't take a man to be killed, Rexh. I'm sorry," said I, for it did seem a pity to disappoint Rexh so, when he had so nicely arranged everything. I leaned from the saddle and spoke earnestly to the byraktor myself, Rexh's murmured translation for his ears while I held his eyes: "I must get to Scutari to-night. It is necessary. But I do not want to risk any man's life. I take my own life in my hands and go with it on the trail. No one else can carry it for me. That is American custom. It is American custom that I thank you now, and give back to you your protection, and go on alone. If it is not your custom, I am sorry, but by all American custom your honor is safe, and I am American, and Albanian law does not apply to me."

"You speak with a tongue of great learning," said the byraktor, but this time his manner was sympathetic. "However, my honor is my honor, and my protection goes with you all the way to your own tribe. I will go with you to Scutari."

"But I don't want the byraktor to be killed, either!" I wailed; and then the byraktor's

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGI Albania EGI

gendarme came forward. He was a low-browed, 577
rascally-looking fellow, a man with bad eyes like 628
those of an untrustworthy horse, and a charming smile. He was naked except for the wide scarlet sash around his loins and the tiny white cap over his scalplock.

"The honor of my byraktor is my honor," he said. "My byraktor is a good byraktor and a great byraktor. He is byraktor of five hundred houses. If he is killed, all the valley mourns. If he is killed in the dark and we never know who killed him so that we can kill that man, that is black dishonor for all the tribe of Shoshi. I am only one man, and if I am killed it does not matter. I will go with you to Scutari."

"Glory to your lips!" said the others. "Good! It is decided."

"Well," I thought, "all this is beautiful 628
rhetoric, but no one will kill him while I am with him." As for the danger in the darkness, I did not believe it for a moment. Who would shoot a person he could not see? So I said good-by to the byraktor—all our long and flowery speeches consumed another quarter of an hour, and the sunlight was climbing away over the mountains so rapidly that we could see it go—and I said good-by to all the others, and promised the frantic Shala man that indeed he should be paid what had been promised; I would send him the money by the gendarme, and I would send the mule and the hundred kronen to the byraktor—and then another difficulty arose. If I left the

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGl Albania EGl

628 Shala man unprotected here, in the midst of the Shoshi men who had traveled amiably with him all that day—but he had never wandered beyond eyeshot of me—his life would be no safer than in the hands of the gendarmes of Scutari.

I actually felt despair when Rexh pointed this out. "Well, but he has to get back through the tribe of Shoshi somehow, anyway, hasn't he? Why on earth did he ever start this idiotic trip?"

"He wanted the money, Mrs. Lane, and he cannot think ahead. He came through Shoshi only for a joke. If he can get away alive from these men he can go back through Pultit."

"Well, ask the byraktor if he will give me this Shala man's worthless life. Ask him not to let his men shoot him until after to-morrow night. Ask him if the Shala man may stay safely under the byraktor's protection until the gendarme gets back with his money, and then go in peace."

000 So this was arranged, and the Shala man, turning his beautiful eyes most languishingly to mine, fervently kissed my hands in Italian fashion; and again I said good-by to the byraktor, and at last, just as the last sunlight left the mountains, Rexh, the gendarme, the mule, and I continued our way toward Scutari.

We followed the winding trail along the banks of the Kiri River. Twilight was over the rushing waters and the cliffs; all along the way the trees were misty green with the youngest of new leaves, and the air was very pure and still. It was all peaceful and very beautiful, and, lulled

## PEAKS OF SHALA

000 He overtook us, hurrying the mule with blows, and we fell in behind him, speculating now and then around which turn of the cliffs we would first see the Kiri bridge, that lovely succession of old stone arches, built long ago in the Italian style, and wondering what the girls in the Red Cross house would say when we so unexpectedly arrived.

628 The crash of the thing that happened was like an explosion—over before one had time to comprehend it. I happened to be looking toward the gendarme,* a couple of yards ahead of me, walking at the donkey's head; I had just taken my eyes from the creamy blue river and I saw him reach for his rifle. A misty rain was falling; he had thrown my poncho over his shoulders; the strap that held his rifle ran under it. His gesture was quick and desperate, some part of the rifle caught on a rent in the poncho and the heavy oilcloth ripped apart with a loud tearing sound. The broken, frantic, struggling movement was printed on my eyeballs, and then with headlong leaps I had reached him: we stood beside a bowlder that had blocked my view of the trail, and in front of us were two rifles, pointed straight at us.

There were two men behind the rifles, but I swear that I saw only the rifles. I flung out my hand and heard the most fluting feminine voice I have ever commanded crying, "Long life to you!" And then the rifles fired.

I have tried to give the effect of the thing as

*[of Shoshi tribe accom[278]panying author to Scuta. --Analyst]

628 it happened; I may now say at once that I was not killed, though I shouldn't have been at all surprised if I had next realized that I was dead. Instead, I saw two very haughty and displeased Albanians advancing up the trail. "And to you long life!" they said, stiffly, and turned their heads from the gendarme as they passed him. When they were quite gone I was startled to find myself in a heap on the trail, weeping aloud like a six-year-old. It's odd how such things take you; I suppose it was the surprise of it.

The gendarme did not seem unduly excited. He said he had killed the cousin of one of those men not long before, and had been a little afraid of meeting him on this road. He said they had lifted their rifles when they saw me, and the bullets had gone over our heads. He said that from now on, if I did not mind, he would wear my hat as a disguise, because there were more of that man's relatives about. And would I mind walking beside him until we passed the Kiri bridge? He would then be out of the dangerous territory. As for my poncho, he was very sorry that he had torn it. I assured him that it did not matter.

000 I walked beside him all the way to the Kiri bridge, and then got on the wooden saddle again and leaned back and rested. There was still an hour of traveling across the Scutari plain.

The sunlight faded from the silvering western sky, the western mountains were low dark shapes blotting out the stars. Far away a light twinkled

●628 Anarchy Knows no prisons—the most fundamental of social institutions — so that the only punishment inflicted among the tribesmen was death. Here lay the origin of the blood feud; the scourge of life in the mountains and a practice of the deepest social significance. In a community, any crime is an offence against society as a whole, and the appropriate penalties are prescribed in accordance with the law. Under anarchy, however, as in international relations, the importance of a crime lies less in its intrinsic character than in the challenge which it represents to the victim's prestige. All crimes, therefore, be they murder, rape, theft, or merely insult, are of equal weight; and the consideration which a man will receive from his fellows depends upon the speed and violence with which he avenges a wrong. Prestige, however, can only suffer from a public slight; and it was said among the Albanians that though a rough word in company would often lead to a feud of years, a blow unseen by third parties might well be forgotten.

The same considerations of prestige which lay at the root of the blood feuds were the cause of their persistence. The rights and wrongs of a particular vendetta might arouse little interest, but the manner of its prosecution was the public test of the power of the clans concerned. On rare occasions the aggressors might confess their guilt and the aggrieved forgo their pound of flesh for an indemnity in cash or kind. Otherwise the blood feud would be waged, perhaps without passion and with many truces, but relentlessly, sometimes even for generations, until both sides to the dispute were agreed that enough blood had flowed for the account to be closed with honour. The blood feuds were thus both an effect of anarchy, and, by the divisions which they multiplied among the mountaineers, a cause of its perpetuation. To such an extent, indeed, did they dominate the daily life of the Albanians — and naturally, for few things occupy a man's mind so effectively as the fear of sudden death — that, in most issues which arose among them, they took sides according to their feuds rather than their opinions.

183 Travellers returning from Albania have been wont to dwell on the famous code of honour, the Law of Lek, which is said to prescribe the rules of the blood feud and the general manners

00 hearths at night. We watched their unfamiliar ways, studied
668 their starkly realist opinions, and by a hundred different
[662] arguments preached war against the Germans. Abas Kupi
meanwhile worked hard to strengthen his faction, rewarding
friends, corrupting enemies, and gently menacing the un-
628 decided. Above all he sought to impose a truce between the
warring clans whose blood feuds threatened the unity of the
Zogist cause. The *Hakmeria*, or blood feud, had its merits,
for it was a great teacher of manners and of respect for the
dignity of the individual. No Albanian indeed could strike
[683] another with impunity, and even schoolmasters had been
known to pay with their lives for a hasty cuff in class. But the feuds took a heavy toll of life and suffering; and we met men from weak clans who had scarcely left their homes in twenty years for fear of neighbours with whom they were "in blood". Under the monarchy some attempt had been made to suppress the feuds; and they had begun to decline before the growing power of the Central Government. With the collapse, however, of Italian rule the mountaineers had returned to their ancient anarchy, and now blood feuds flourished on every side. As foreigners we stood in no danger from them, but they were none the less an important factor in our daily life. A guide would take us several hours out of our way to avoid crossing the territory of a clan with which he was "in blood"; chieftains would suddenly postpone a meeting, alarmed by rumours that their enemies were lying in wait; and sometimes at tribal gatherings we would see a man pass the coffee cup to his neighbour under his knee — the supreme mark of contempt for the man who had not even tried to avenge a wrong.

628 The persistence of the blood feuds presented Abas Kupi with a serious problem, for every time a clan was won to his cause their blood enemies would side automatically with his rivals. He therefore laboured patiently to reconcile the contending parties, and in accordance with the Law of Lek invited them to submit their feuds to his arbitration. There was, moreover, an ancient tradition that a general truce, or *besa*, might be proclaimed like the medieval "Truce of God" if a region was

in danger of foreign attack. To secure such a *besa* and so restore 628
the unity of Mati was now the Agha's foremost aim.

We were joined every now and then by groups of notables 662
who would accompany us on the march for two or three days. Among them came one, Hafuz Effendi, a shrunken, bird-like creature, who had been deputy of Mati under the Italians. Like many of the older Albanians Hafuz still wrote for preference in the Arabic script and for our benefit recited the opening *surahs* of the Koran. He had been on Essad Pasha's staff in the last war and since then, in the time-serving tradition of the Ottoman bureaucracy, had worked in turn for Fan Noli, Zog, and the Italians. During the occupation, indeed, he had twice betrayed Abas Kupi's hide-out to the Italians, and was even held responsible for the arrest of some of the guerillas. Now, however, that the Italians were gone, he piously proclaimed himself a democrat and had come to offer his services to Abas Kupi, in whom he discerned the paramount influence of the day. Such time-serving exceeded, even among the Albanians; and, despite his great age, he was mocked unmercifully by young and old. He was a guest, however, albeit self-invited, and while he was with us no one would have thought of harming him. Abas Kupi let him stay with us two days and then dismissed him to his house, but kindly; for it was now his policy to forget the past and to stretch out a hand to all who would support him.

Germanic names, such as Allemani and Walter, were found [551]
among the Mati clans, derived, so it was said, from Crusaders
who had settled in Albania on their way to the East. The 628
Walter clan had declared for Abas Kupi, but they were still suspect to the Zogists; for they had long been blood enemies of the King. One of them indeed, named Bekir, had tried in 1924 to assassinate Zog in the Tirana Parliament. He had only succeeded in wounding him and, to escape capture, had then locked himself up in the Parliament lavatory. There he had reloaded and prepared to stand siege, singing patriotic songs to keep up his courage. None of the deputies had dared to break in the door, for they knew that Bekir was armed;

628 but after some parley he had been persuaded to surrender to Kotsuli, his party chief. Thanks to Kotsuli's efforts his sentence had been commuted to one of exile; and he had lived abroad, in Paris. Fifteen years later, when the Italians had driven Zog from the throne, Bekir had decided to return to Albania. There, business took him to Valona, and, late one night, staying in the chief hotel, he heard someone calling for help and beating against the wall. He went to investigate and found that some unfortunate man had locked himself up in the lavatory and could not get out. Bekir began to unpick the lock and, as he did so, a voice said from within:

"I am Kotsuli! I will reward your kindness."

"There is no need," replied Bekir, as he set free his former party chief, "for I am Walter. The debt was mine!"

We did not see Bekir, for his friendship with Kotsuli had led him into collaboration with the Germans, but the Walter clan received us well.

*669 Our progress through Mati was crowned by a grand gathering of the *Beys* in the stronghold of Dule, the chief of the powerful Allemani clan. Dule was a dark, inbred-looking man with sensitive, aquiline features wasted by consumption. For years he had pitted himself against Zog, but hatred of foreign rule had led him to join Abas Kupi; and he had astonished the tribes by his valour in the rising against the Italians. He was indeed a true *Caballero de la Triste Figura*, hiding a brave and generous nature beneath a decadent and ragged frame. A score or so of notables had assembled to meet us, and their bodyguards, camped about the keep, must have numbered close on a thousand men. Among them were Sul Kurti, a favourite of the King, known as the Lion of Mati, but grown old and heavy; Doda, the Italianised young *Bairaktar* of Kthelle, who was the leading Catholic among the Zogists and a cousin of the redoubtable Captain of Mirdita; and Yussuf Chelai, the dignified and courteous chief of the neighbouring clan. Yussuf Bey's presence was a pleasant surprise, for Allemanis and Chelais had long been "in blood"; and their reconciliation was a great triumph for Abas Kupi.

000 "Where the Captain leads, I will follow."

We stretched out on his mud floor and slept a couple of
hours, but then pressed on, not wishing to stay there long
enough for news of our presence to reach Marko Joni. Our
short rest had stiffened rather than refreshed us, but that night,
at about ten o'clock, after a march of altogether twenty-two
hours, we crawled into a low stone fortress near the village of
Konai. There we were hospitably entertained by a cousin of
Marko Joni, who inclined, however, to the Zogist cause. The
622 company that evening included Res Lufi, a chieftain from the
borders of Mati and Mirdita, who was renowned for the success
[628] with which he waged his blood feuds. Next day we were to
pass a well where, some years earlier, he had drowned six of
his blood enemies whom he had taken in their sleep.

000 From Konai the path to Mati led through Oroshi, the seat of the Abbot of Mirdita, and one of Marko Joni's strongholds. We judged it more prudent, therefore, to make a slight detour and set out in the morning to climb the Mali Shengjit, or Mount Saint John, a broad, wooded massif which separates the regions of Mirdita and Lura. The day was fine, but we made slow progress; for the going was rough and the men nearing the limit of endurance. In the late afternoon, however, we descended into Lura and stopped by the side of the path to smoke and chat with a farmer returning from the market. He spoke for some time of local politics and then added as an afterthought:

"They said in the market that Rome has fallen and that the English have landed in France!"

Our bodyguards greeted the news with wild shouts and fired their rifles into the air; the old man was embraced by all and sundry; and we left him still sitting by the roadside, bewildered that anyone should be excited by news of these distant events.

We pushed on next morning through the barren gorges of Matsukull and in the evening reached Sul Kurti's house on the fringes of the Mati valley. We found old Sul sitting on a carpet in his orchard enjoying the last hours of daylight with one of his sons. This young man had come from Tirana only the day before, and from him we learnt details of the battle in France. That night Sul gave us a banquet in honour of the landing and

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EG1 Albania EG1

114 penalties; and finally the conventions which govern the blood-feud.
[208] For the blood-feud has occupied from time immemorial, and no
[577] doubt still occupies, a very important place in Albanian life, providing the ultimate sanction in all cases in which personal honour is concerned, and on points of personal honour the Albanian is particularly sensitive; and the blood-feud is regulated by a number of very well understood even if unwritten rules and principles.

171
721 It is interesting to compare Albanian customary law with that of other headhunters, for the Albanians (see p. 230 below and Miss
[826] Durham, *Tribal Origins, etc.*, pp. 172 ff.) till recently at any rate were headhunters. The belief underlying headhunting generally is that life is a material substance residing *par excellence* in the head, and that the abstraction of an enemy's head enables the life-substance in it to be carried off to the head-taker's home to replenish the stock there and increase the fertility of its inhabitants,
[842] its crops, and its livestock. Incidentally a surplus of life-substance
[583] is necessary to beget children, and hence comes the importance of head-taking as a preliminary to marriage. The tuft left on the
[302] head by Albanians (p. 230), as by many Indian tribes and castes, by Chinese, American Indians and others, was probably left originally to shelter life-substance regarded as residing, as in the case of Samson, in the hair. Some Naga tribesmen of Assam give the same account of the purpose of this uncut tuft as do Mrs Hasluck's Albanians, that it is kept to carry away the head by. But this explanation has no doubt arisen from the fact that it is so used in practice. Among the Assam headhunters the vendetta is a communal or a village affair rather than a family one, and there is no taboo on taking the heads of women in pursuance of it, but
[628] quite the contrary. In this respect the Albanian practice is more suggestive of that of the Pathans of the North-West Frontier of India. Otherwise the unwritten law of Albania has much similarity with that of south-east Asia and Oceania. The communal destruction of an offender's house at which all members of the community must assist, for instance, is widely distributed from Assam to New Zealand; the banishment of a murderer for life or for a term of years according to the circumstances of the homicide, the association of compurgators with an accused person in the taking of an oath, the assessment of blood-money, are used in the Assam hills much as in the Albanian mountains, and probably in many other
000 primitive areas also. But Albanian customary law is of particular

600 embodied in a code there is an end to its spontaneous development.
671 But to reach this stage the code must be an enacted code, written and recorded, and this the pronouncements of the Albanian law-givers failed to achieve. On the contrary their codes seem to have remained in the verbal custody of the village or tribal elders and subject to modification or reinterpretation from time to time by assemblies of clans or villages. It is at this stage that we have Mrs Hasluck's account of Albanian customary law—law primitive enough in many ways to be compared with the customary law of tribes much less civilized than the Albanians; but it reached the point, and that some five hundred years ago, of becoming codified verbally by the efforts of individual law-givers, Skanderbeg in particular and the famous Lek Dukagjini, without having reached
[628] the stage of enactment. This was principally due to the fact that there was no one able to enforce sanctions over the Albanian community as a whole; individual Albanian chieftains had not the power, and Turkish rule interfered but little outside the towns.

● 628 It was no doubt this absence of any such sanctions as those
671 provided by an enacted law and enforced by a settled government, or merely even by the continuity in administration of a single ruling family, which was the primary cause of the firm establishment of the vendetta as the real sanction for all Albanian law and custom. At the same time, however, economic conditions have probably contributed to this result, for in a richer country the administration of justice might have been made profitable to any ruler strong enough to provide it. Thus Albanian customary law not only reflects an economic stage through which most nations have passed before the establishment of enacted codes, but also a condition, by no means unique but very far from universal, in which poor and isolated communities have resorted to the vendetta for the sanction of their law, and that in spite of any influence that
171 Christianity or Islam might have had to prevent it. The etiquette
628 of the vendetta itself is likewise a customary code not dissimilar to
[624] taboo in nature and origins; and without any more definite sanction, or naturally any sort of legislative enactment, regular and almost technical forms of procedure have come into existence in what virtually are regularly constituted courts. In this the Icelandic practices, as described in the sagas of Njal and Kormak, for instance, afford a near parallel to those of Albania, and Mrs Hasluck's account of Albanian custom will prove of importance not

merely to ethnologists and social anthropologists but also to those 171 concerned with the early history of jurisprudence. 628

Apart from that the contents of this volume are likely to be of 101 no little interest to the general reader as giving an account of the unfamiliar way of life of a people of very distinct and individual culture, who have throughout history taken pride and pleasure in their separateness. For the Albanians, direct descendants of the ancient Illyrians, still retain something of their ancient form of Aryan speech very distinct from that of other branches of the family; they still retain an ancient tribal system; and they still have that passionate love of independence which caused many of them to forsake their native mountains and form settlements in Greece, Calabria, and Sicily when their country was occupied by the Turks after the death of their leader Skanderbeg (George Castriota) in 1467. As a result of the Turkish conquest several of the Albanian tribes changed from Christianity to Islam, and there are now many Muslim Albanians as well as both Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Christians. The Mirdite, who constitute the biggest tribe, were perhaps at one time Orthodox, and are now staunch Catholics. But their profession of faith seems to have affected but little the adherence of the Albanians to their ancient customs.

J. H. HUTTON

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lenders for the want of security), and in the less-developed north 562
she invested it in sheep, plough-oxen, or even horses which she 593
hired out on the 'half-and-half' system. Before a woman died, she 426
gave a little of her *pekul* to her daughters and the major part to
her sons, but nothing to her husband, so making a last comment
on the curiously detached relationship between them during their
married life.

Except in the towns, no Albanian woman ever went into 357
domestic service. Each worked as a girl in her father's house and
then in her husband's and, though never paid any money, was
assured for life of whatever board, lodging and clothes these could
provide. This applied even to families of the standing of Cen Elezi
in Dibër. Consequently the Unwritten Law took no cognizance of
female servants. On the other hand, men servants—mainly farm
workers or herdsmen—were numerous enough to have been carefully legislated for.

Though such a servant ate out of the same dish as his master and
slept in the sitting-room or elsewhere in the same conditions as the
young unmarried men of the family, he had always to take a back
seat—in the literal sense near the door and far from the fire; and,
in the metaphorical sense, effacing himself. This befitted both his
youth and his status. For his status was like that of a woman. 'It
is for the master to command and for the servant to obey', said
the Unwritten Law. If he were a shepherd, his views on the beasts
under his care commanded his master's respect, but other servants
were required to keep their opinions to themselves. In areas such 357
as Martanesh where women could not be killed in a blood feud, 628
a servant was as safe as they were from his master's enemies. 'Kill
a servant? Faugh! As well kill a woman', was the sentiment.

There was, however, another aspect to his position: since he [574]
came from another family in his master's village or from another
village altogether, he was not a member of his master's household
but was its guest. As such he was entitled to protection by his
master against all hurt from third parties. If he were hit, the
offender must pay twice, compensating him for the personal injury
of the blow and his master for the affront to his guest. If he were
robbed, his master latterly complained to the police, but in the old
days would have shot the robber out of hand in the north, but in
Martanesh and farther south, not until he saw that the servant
himself was too weak to resent the injury as honour demanded. If

357 628 a servant were killed, a modern master again told the police, but nevertheless both he and the servant's family considered themselves at feud with the murderer, the former to avenge the death of his guest and the latter to avenge the death of their relative; more often than not, the master made it 'tit for tat' by killing the murderer's servant. In former times a servant was most commonly killed because he was mixed up in a blood feud of his own. In that event his master went to see his enemy and warned him that the man was now in his service and, consequently, under his protection. If his enemy disregarded the warning, his master never rested until he had avenged the servant.

Again in the old days, vengeance took a fiercer turn when the servant was from a different community. He was then counted as a stranger, and the guest of his master's tribe or village, as well as of his master himself. If he were killed by one of this community, the others rose as one man, burned down the murderer's house and destroyed all his goods. The modern Albanian government has repressed this custom, but the servant's master and family still try to shoot the murderer.

The same public vengeance used to await the murderer of a local servant who was working for a stranger to the tribe or village. But in such a case it was the injury to its stranger guest which the community wished to avenge; in itself the death of the servant was a matter for private vengeance by his family. In aggravated cases, as when the murdered servant as well as his master was a stranger, the community might order the execution of the murderer by a firing squad. This was done in 1944 in the village of Dukat, in south-west Albania.

357 No Albanian ever stooped to become a servant except from dire necessity. Most commonly he wanted to marry, and having no spare cash, must earn enough to pay for his bride. He was usually engaged on St George's or St Demetrius's day in the Old Style calendar, and so on 6 May and 8 November in ours, dates which correspond roughly to the beginning and end of the dry season. His engagement was for six months or, more often, a year. His wages and his work depended on the bargain he made with his master before being hired. In the 1930's his wages, including food only, ranged according to his quality from one napoleon (16*s.* at par) to half a napoleon a month, payable monthly. In late Turkish times, when clothes as well as food were given, the rates were from

231 If a dog was unusually fierce, it might be tied up early and loosed
late. If a locality was dangerous or if the dog's master was at feud
with someone, the dog might be loosed precisely at sundown and
574 left free till exactly sunrise. As a result of the latter proviso
a stranger who reached a village about sunset must ask immediately
in the interest of his own safety whether his intended host is at feud
with anyone. If he were, he called to his host from a safe distance
—the fiercest dog did not stir unprovoked beyond the outskirts of
its own farmyard. There followed an exchange of conventional
questions and answers, designed to convince the host that the
stranger came as a friend and not as an enemy. When convinced,
the host bade the stranger stay where he was and forbade him to
speak—this in case the dog charged in the direction of the voice.
He then tied up the dog while some of his womenfolk went to
inspect the stranger, and if satisfied that he was harmless, to bring
him to the house.

231 When a house dog attacked a stranger the law considered three
683 positions: (*a*) when the dog only threatened to bite, (*b*) when it
● 628 succeeded in biting and (*c*) when it killed. In all three positions
there was discrimination between attack by day and attack by night.

If during the daytime a house dog threatened to bite a stranger, the latter might kill it without incurring a penalty. The day was his time not the dog's, and he was in the right and the dog in the wrong. To attack him it must have broken its chain or pulled up the stake to which it had been tied. Its master too was at fault for not having observed that its chain and stake were insecure. Exceptionally in Martanesh the stranger was fined 100 grosh.

If again during the daytime a house dog succeeded in biting a stranger its master must indemnify the stranger, and that irrespective of whether the dog had been killed or not. In Dibër he escaped by paying the blood money due for wounding a man. In the more picturesque north he must keep the wounded man in his house free of charge until he recovered, pay any doctor's bills that might be incurred and pay the wounded man what he would have earned if well. The northerners were so poor that they found such expenses a heavy burden. In consequence they tested a dog's chain and stake from time to time and sent their womenfolk to escort a stranger to and from the house; they could not perform this task themselves because they did not enjoy a woman's immunity from attack by a lurking enemy. A poor man, desperate

as he saw his dog about to bite, might even shoot the animal, 231
regarding its loss as the lesser evil. Occasionally a man sought to 683
disclaim responsibility, shouting that he was not a chain-making 628
gypsy and only bought, and did not make, the faulty chain. The stranger would retort that he was not dog's meat. Then revolvers might be drawn and a blood feud begun. More probably the dog's owner sullenly invited the wounded man to partake of the hospitality demanded by the law.

If a house dog killed a stranger during the daytime, it was in most places as if its master had killed him and a blood feud sprang up between the two families. In Dibër, however, the payment of full blood money generally satisfied the bereaved family.

During the night the law was entirely on the side of the house dog 231
and its master. No matter how the animal might threaten a stranger 685
he might not kill it. If he did so, he must pay blood money or have 683
a feud with its master, exactly as if it was the latter he had killed. 628
The Kanùn says clearly that 'at night a dog is equivalent to a man'. [682]
Indeed, in some places such as Çermenikë the animal was thought more important and its murder by night was more serious. If a house dog succeeded in biting a stranger at night, the latter got nothing from its master—neither hospitality and doctor's fees nor indemnity for wages lost. From his neighbours he got mockery—'Fancy letting yourself be bitten by a dog. You're a fine man.' Even if a house dog killed a stranger at night there was no compensation, the death went unavenged. Once upon a time, in Lurë, a daughter-in-law of Demir Lleshi went out at night into her own farmyard. A neighbour's dog sprang on her and killed her, but since it was night time, the dog's time, her blood was lost. It was immaterial that the dog was trespassing and that she was on her own ground.

There was only one exception to these rules. If a house stood 231
near a main road an aggressive dog might be killed during the night 685
without penalty. A higher law stated that 'it is not right to cut 628
a main road with a dog'. In the far north bajraktars and elders had been known to order fierce dogs near a main road to be kept chained at night as well as during the day.

The blood money which was payable on killing a house dog at night was generally the same as would be payable if a man had been killed. The blood money for a bitch was the same as for a dog; there was no discrimination between the sexes as there was in the

231 case of murdered man and murdered woman. In some areas, such
685 as Kurbin, the blood money for a house dog was assessed by the
[illegible]28 elders or government authorities.

A stranger who agreed in his simplicity to pay the owner what he demanded for his dead dog might find himself presented with a fine bill. The owner would say that the dog had saved his life on several occasions and was consequently worth six, ten or even twenty napoleons. Sometimes the owner asked the stranger, not for blood money, but for another dog of the same quality as the dead animal. The cost might exceed the conventional amount of blood money.

In the above cases a house dog had been killed in self-defence. When it was killed out of spite matters were much more serious. 'He who kills a house dog will steal your wife', says the Kanùn. Such killings usually took place at night because the aggressor would find it dangerous to approach the house in daylight. This aggravated the crime since the night was the dog's own time.

In Mirditë, Kurbin and Martanesh a man who killed a dog 'in its kennel', i.e. on its own ground and therefore spitefully, must pay its master 500 grosh, almost a fortune in these poverty-stricken areas. In north Albania his life was forfeit. When he had been killed by the dog's master, his relatives killed one of the latter's family, arguing that they could not permit their relative to be equated to a dog. In most cases the two parties being 'one for one' the dog's master then consented to make peace on condition of receiving blood money for the dead animal. He might stipulate, if he wished, that this should take the form of an ox or a horse and so cost more than the conventional blood money. Occasionally the feud was continued—it is on record that twelve men in the north once died for the sake of one dog. In any region a man who immediately pardoned the killer of his dog would be taunted as
695 a weakling. In Lumë the man who was suspected of having killed a house dog found dead, a crime as costly as killing a man, could not clear himself unless he persuaded twenty-four elders to take oath with him.

231 The legal discrimination between defensive and spiteful killing
685 made it important for a man who killed a dog during the daytime
672 to establish his motive. He could do so simply and surely. If his bullet had struck the dog in the forehead or chest it was evident that the animal was charging him and he had fired in fear. If, on the

other hand, he had shot the dog in the back he must have killed it out of spite. 231 686 672

Whereas house dogs remained at home and were chained up for half their lives, sheep dogs were normally free both day and night and divided their time between the mountain-side and the sheepfold. Their function was to protect the flock from thieves and wolves. If these approached, they must bark a timely warning so as to bring the shepherds with their rifles and they must themselves attack the marauders. They must therefore be alert, courageous and fierce, true 'Molossian hounds'. In districts infested by wolves they wore iron collars set with iron spikes to prevent the wolf from tearing open their throat. In common with other sheep dogs in the Near and Middle East they did not handle the flock. That was led, or occasionally driven, by the shepherd unaided.

As fierceness was their most important asset, sheep dogs were given the same harsh upbringing as house dogs. Indeed, they were generally removed at a still earlier age from their mother so that they should not know even her caresses for long. But they were gentle enough with their flocks, from which they never parted. As puppies they were fed on ewe's or goat's milk—hence, said the peasants of Shpat, their later friendliness with the animals they guarded. In adult life they were fed on maize bread roughly baked in indigestible looking balls by the shepherds. Nevertheless, their strength and the sleekness of their coats showed that the diet was sufficient.

The law of the sheep dog varied from place to place according to the animal's position in the local economy. In the north, where men depended almost entirely on their flocks, the sheep dog was of paramount importance as the guardian of its master's whole livelihood and was protected by the law to the utmost. In areas such as Kurbin, where men combined agriculture with sheep-breeding, the sheep dog was of less importance to its master and some relaxation appears in the law. In fertile areas like Lumë or Krasniqë, where agriculture predominated, the sheep dog was still less important and the law less drastic. So in the north it was more serious to kill a sheep dog than a house dog and elsewhere the position was reversed. 231 685 628. 683

Among the mountains of the north the law of the sheep dog was the same by day and by night. A passer-by might be bitten at any hour of the day or night, but if he killed the dog he would be killed

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628
683
685

by its master. No excuse for his crime could be tolerated. He might have lost his way or be a stranger (and so a guest to be protected). No matter! The mountain was the dog's ground day and night. Why had he gone near the sheep? Was it to steal one? There was no road through the flock. He should have stuck to the highway which was inalienably his, day and night. If he were killed by the dog, his family had no right to claim blood money or to start a feud; his 'blood was lost'. In Dibër the same harsh laws prevailed. In the partly pastoral, partly agricultural area of Kurbin a man who killed a sheep dog generally escaped with the payment of blood money; his life was not necessarily forfeit. In Martanesh, where the economy was similar, a man who killed a sheep dog in terror of his life and proved his motive was fined 100 grosh, the amount payable for a house dog in the same circumstances.

In the adjacent Çermenikë he was not even fined. In fertile Lumë the law was that 'a man can't lose his life for a dog', and on that theory a traveller on the mountain might kill a sheep dog which had refused to let him pass. For penalty he needed only to go to the dog's master and beg his pardon. He was generally afraid to go alone—the dog's master might suspect that he had killed the dog from spite and might be in an evil temper as a result. So he generally asked others to accompany him. These confessed his crime and asked for pardon. It was never refused. If he had killed a house dog during the daytime in this district, he would have had to pay blood money as for a murdered man, or would have been killed. On the rich plateau of Krasniqë sheep-rearing is relatively so unimportant that sheep dogs come under the same rules as house dogs. If, for instance, one bites a stranger on the mountain its master must pay for the wound.

Even in the gentler areas the spiteful or senseless killing of a sheep dog may start a blood feud. An extreme case occurred 'long ago' in Lumë. The sheep belonging to the Onuzi sept were sleeping in a mountain fold near the fold of the Doçi sept. The dogs began to fight among themselves and the Doçi shepherd killed an Onuzi dog. The Onuzi shepherd drew his revolver and shot the Doçi man dead. A general fight then started among the shepherds and in a few minutes six Onuzi and twelve Doçi men lay dead for the sake of a dog. The feud raged on for years, not ceasing until it was at last composed by direct order of the reigning Sultan.

Successive generations of travellers evolved practical expedients

for dealing with sheep dogs. The first was to 'let sleeping dogs lie'. 231
If a traveller were so unfortunate as to find one in his path and 628
there was no shepherd in sight to call it in, he swerved aside, 683
keeping well to leeward in the hope that neither sound nor scent 685
of his presence would reach the dog. If a dog charged, the traveller might follow the example of Ulysses on his return home and sit down. The dog would probably sit down too and immobilize him until the shepherd's arrival, but it was not likely to charge again. This expedient was more favoured in central than in northern Albania. There the traveller preferred to climb a tree in the hope that the flock would soon pass, so releasing him. The dog was not really interested in him and went on with the flock. It has happened when, a flock was large and grazing, that a man has had to stay half a day up a tree, with several dogs barking under his feet; for it was customary in north Albania to leave a grazing flock in sole charge of the sheep dog for many hours. For that reason, as soon as a traveller heard sheep bells—and in that country of long narrow valleys enclosed by lofty mountains he might hear them half an hour away—he called out. If no answering shout came, he knew that there was no shepherd with the flock and laid his plans accordingly. As far south as Shpat fear of a sheep dog might send a traveller up a tree, but there rescue came swiftly because shepherds were forbidden to leave their flocks for long. Tracks in Shpat were too many and travellers too numerous to allow of lengthy hold-ups by sheep dogs. With the same motive of protecting travellers, shepherds in the few treeless areas of north Albania were required to remain with their flocks.

If, however, a flock was grazing near a main road, the sheep dog came under the law already enunciated that 'it is not right to cut a main road with a dog'. Day and night, when near such a road, the sheep dog must be kept under control by means of the shepherd's voice or a chain, preferably the latter as being surer. A traveller who found a sheep dog loose on such a road and received no answer to his call from the shepherd was entitled to kill the dog and did not have to compensate its master.

Shooting dogs had the run of the house and kitchen as well as 231
the farmyard and were never tied up. Born gentle, they were well 683
enough treated by their masters to remain so throughout their lives. They were not found in every house but only with the leisured or the lazy.

231 683 A stranger who was bitten by a shooting dog could neither kill it nor claim compensation for his wound. Indeed, he became a public butt for being feckless enough to let himself be bitten by so tame an animal.

231 685 If a stranger killed a shooting dog by mischance, he must compensate the master in money—two napoleons were thought adequate in most places. Alternatively, he must give him another dog as good as the one he had killed. The hour of the crime was immaterial.

224 628 If a shooting dog was killed from motives of spite, a feud followed as in the case of house and sheep dogs.

If a shooting dog put up a hare, only its master had the right to take the hare. It might be that the chase was long and that the hare was shot by a stranger before the dog's master caught it up. In that case the latter demanded the hare and offered the stranger a fresh cartridge in return for the one he had just expended. If the offer was refused a blood feud started, the first shot being fired by the stranger.

If two men went shooting with only one dog, they skinned the hares at the end of the day and divided them equally.

231 Pet dogs, like shooting dogs, were free of the house as well as the farmyard and ran loose day and night. Of indeterminate pedigree, they were about the size of small Aberdeens. They were not common in northern Albania, where their only purpose was to divert their master—it was thought great fun to hang a lighted cigarette round their necks. In central Albania where the average flock was small and always had a shepherd, they were much prized as watchdogs. They never failed at either house or sheepfold to bark warningly when unwelcome visitors approached. They were so brave that at sheepfolds they could dash out and tackle a marauding wolf, invariably losing their life in the unequal combat. On account of their usefulness their value was high, as much as six or seven napoleons.

The law when they killed (a virtually impossible contingency) or were killed was the same as it was for shooting dogs.

231 793 A few isolated rules remain to be mentioned. Clerics such as priests among Catholics or Orthodox or hoxhas and sheikhs among Mohammedans were forbidden to keep house dogs. Their houses must be open day and night to their parishioners or passing strangers and might not be closed by dogs. If they kept sheep dogs

they must not bring them home, but must leave them at the more 231
or less distant sheepfold. There was no ban on their keeping 793
shooting and pet dogs.

If a house dog disappeared temporarily during the mating 231
season so that its master could not find it at dawn to tie it up for 672
the day, he remained responsible for its conduct. It was held that a house dog loose under such conditions during the daytime was like one that had been duly tied up but had broken loose. Happily for its master and for strangers, a dog was generally too much occupied at such seasons with its own affairs to trouble about strangers.

If any type of dog fell into a snare set by a neighbour near its 224
master's house, the neighbour must pay its full value. He had no 672
doubt obtained its master's consent before he set the snare, but that did not relieve him of his liability for ensuing casualties.

Damage done by dogs must be paid for in money or by the dog's 231
death. Each case was handled with a good deal of ceremony. If 685
a dog ate a neighbour's eggs or killed his fowls, the latter asked its master to tie it up. If he refused, the neighbour had the right to kill the dog, and its master could not exact compensation. The neighbour generally took an oath in public that the dog had developed a habit of eating his eggs or killing his fowls, and that he had asked its master to tie it up and had been told to kill it. If he killed the dog without warning, he must in most places pay its value as assessed by the local elders. But in that case its master must first take oath that it had never eaten eggs or killed fowls. If the dog was commonly considered valuable, the neighbour would probably warn its master twice before he killed it. In Çermenikë and Martanesh the law was sterner; a delinquent dog had always to be
killed, but if this were done without its master's leave, a blood feud [628]
started. In such cases the culprit was generally a house dog.

In cases of sheep-worrying the culprit was invariably a sheep dog. The general verdict was that the animal must die, but there was some variation in local methods of reaching this verdict. In north Albania and in Yugoslav Kosovë the dog's master must indemnify the sheep owner for every sheep worried and must take oath that the dog acted of its own impulse and had not been specially trained to kill sheep; any proof that it had been so trained would immediately cause him to be killed by the sheep owner. He must also kill the dog or keep it chained up in perpetuity. If the

road two loaded donkeys might meet and pass, but two loaded 492
horses could not. When these met, one or the other had to step 499
aside from the road, turning back, if need be to find a suitable place in which to do so. This was almost invariably of nature's making; there were no artificial passing places as on narrow motor roads in England.

Load generally determined priority of passage. To use Albanian 494
phraseology, when a riding-saddle met a riding-saddle on a horse- 576
track the one with no saddle-bags or other load besides the rider had to turn back. The riding-saddle had to make way for the loaded pack-saddle, but had priority over an empty one. When two pack-saddles met, the one loaded and the other empty, the latter had to make way for the former. When they were both loaded or both empty, the one which was nearer a possible place at which to step off the road had to turn back. The same rules applied to carts. In the rare cases where there was plenty of room for two loaded horses or carts, there was no 'Keep right' or 'Keep left'; they could pass on whichever side they wished.

The rules about priority were apt to be honoured in the breach 494
rather than the observance. A man who was turned back on his road 628
felt, even if priority was not his, as much disgraced as if his gun had been taken from him. His honour was lost, and could not be redeemed unless he killed his rival. There have been many deaths for the sake of precedence. The men of Godolesh, who were satisfied when the offender was fined by the elders, were condemned by their neighbours as soft and citified. But even in Godolesh there was no more fertile cause of murder than disputes about who should have the right of way. The trouble arose because priority rules were often confused, especially on purpose by strong wilful men, with the general law of road ownership. As enunciated by Father [423]
Gjeçov, this law said that a village street or a public highway was nobody's individual perquisite, but belonged to one man as much as to another. Hence, the living and the dead—traveller and livestock, bride and corpse—had an absolute right to use either, and no man, even if the road passed close to the door of his house, could deny this right.

A road was free to all. It was for breaking this general law that [579]
highway robbery was punished so much more severely than other [685]
forms of theft, and that a traveller who killed a dangerous dog on a highway did not have to compensate its owner.

complained against him to the elders, and he was fined ten grosh in 423
Turkish and two gold francs in modern times. In Turkish times 487
a strong man often forced his way through and only a weak man, [685]
cowed by the guns levelled at him, turned back. The principle of
private ownership was carried so far in this village that it extended
even to a certain garden road which was not blind but had an exit
as well as an entrance. This was reserved for the villagers of one
ward, and forbidden to their animals, to the rest of the village and
to 'foreigners', with one exception. If a girl from another ward or [574]
village had married into the privileged ward,[1] her kinsmen had leave [607]
to use the forbidden path when on their way to visit her. If even
one man in the ward objected, however, he had the right to veto
their passage. It is not known how this unusual privilege came into
being. The most obvious explanation would be that the families [614]
in the ward descended from a common male ancestor, but, in fact,
the families were of very mixed descent.

In the extreme north the individual's safety on certain inter- 486
tribal thoroughfares was ensured by what was called the 'truce of 619
sheep and shepherd', because it mainly concerned shepherds and
their flocks. Actually travellers and public messengers also enjoyed
its protection. Two or more tribes, meeting in full assembly of all
their bajraktars, heads, and youth, swore a solemn truce to attacks
on life and property on a given route or routes within their territory,
and guaranteed its observance. They prescribed the limits of the
road which it covered, regulated the behaviour of persons taking
advantage of it, and enunciated penalties for breaking it. Thus,
a shepherd could lead his flock and graze it only within a prescribed
limit. A traveller or public messenger journeying from one of the
contracting tribes to another had both going and coming to keep
within the points fixed. As soon as he had set foot in the foreign
tribe's territory he had to go straight to the bajraktar's house and
not turn aside to any other. He must not venture out alone but
must always be accompanied by the bajraktar or a guide of his
providing. So long as shepherd, traveller or public messenger 574
obeyed these rules and kept to the prescribed road, he was regarded 628
as a public guest and consequently was guaranteed public protection 486
and, what was almost more important, public vengeance in the 672
event of being murdered or robbed. Protection came from the
knowledge of the penalties which the foreign tribe would exact for
any harm done him. If he were murdered the price of his blood

[1] [in the village of Godolesh --Analyst]

574 was 22 purses instead of the usual 12. If the murderer was slow to
● 628 pay up, the tribe enforced payment. In addition, they burned down
486 three of the *kulla* (houses of two or more storeys) in the murderer's
672 compound. If he did not possess so many, they burned his own *kullë* and two belonging to his nearest relatives. If between them they did not have so many, the tribe searched among his more distant relatives until they found the required number, going back a hundred generations if need be. They also destroyed his property—crops, livestock and the rest—so thoroughly that nothing of it remained. The same penalties were inflicted on a thief who stole sheep travelling or grazing within the protected area. On the other hand, if a traveller, public messenger or shepherd broke the conditions of the truce, straying, for example, from the prescribed path, he was no longer counted a public guest and lost his right to public protection and vengeance. He was still a private guest however. The last man in whose house he stayed before his mishap was bound to kill his murderer or to punish the man who robbed him.

This truce of sheep and shepherd has now died out. At the end of Turkish times it was already confined to the Gjakovë group of tribes in the extreme north-east, such as Nikaj, Mertur, Gash and Krasniq. But Father Gjeçov found traditions of its existence in the Dukagjin tribes of Shalë, Shosh, Kir, Gjâj and Toplanë, and also in Puke, Mirditë, Kthellë, Kurbin and the mountains of Lesh. Father Gjeçov considers the custom to be so old that it dates from days 'before thin-necks began to vomit flame', that is to say, before firearms were invented.

tribal, religious or personal—fostered the belief that moving 423
boundary stones made things specially hard for the sinner in the 685
next world. In this world the elders punished the misdeed with 783
a heavy fine—of varying amount in Mirditë, 30 rams and an ox in Bicaj of Lumë, 3000 grosh and 6 rams in Kastrat, and a Turkish pound and boycott in Godolesh. Everywhere the sinner was publicly disgraced even if he was not always boycotted as in Godolesh, and he had always to compensate his victim financially. He had in fact stolen land, a valuable article of property as representing a man's livelihood. Consequently his crime was punishable as a bad form of theft. In Mirditë a man who had not only moved the boundary stones but also killed his neighbour was fined 100 rams and an ox and publicly executed for his double crime.

Yet in Mirditë one very primitive method of moving a tribal 423
boundary was permissible. If a man had no forest or other source 425
of timber and he had desperate need of this, he might take his axe and go to a forest in a neighbouring tribe—naturally he did not penetrate very far from his own tribe's boundary. The noise his axe made as he felled and lopped a tree soon brought up the foresters. If he had presence of mind and strength of arm enough to drive his axe up to the shaft in the fallen tree, and if the foresters could not pull it out, the boundary of his tribe was advanced to the tree. This was the manner in which Gjokë Buca of Kaçinar won forest from Kushnen. The method may have been peculiar to Mirditë.

In the Malësi e Madhe a man who had a spinney might refuse to permit his neighbour who had none to cut timber to fence in his property. He might want to cut the timber himself next year. It was his own business whether he sold it or not. The other was getting food from his field; let him go and buy or beg wood elsewhere for his fence. Presumably what went for an individual tribesman went for his village or tribe.

When disputes arose, efforts were made to settle them before 628
they ended in bloodshed. Two types of dispute were distinguished, 423
public—as arising between tribe and tribe, village and village, ward of a village and ward of a village—and private, as arising between individual and individual.

Settlement in private disputes might be effected by the parties themselves, by elders or by the government. The first method was

628 the quickest, the second tried when the first failed, and the third
423 when the second failed. In practice recourse to the authorities was
rare and seldom as effective as action by elders.

[695] When settlement was made by the parties themselves, one of the two men quarrelling might exclaim, 'Well, take it on your shoulders' —there was no need to specify what—'and set up the stones'. 'All right', replied the other as he bent to pick up a stone or a clod of earth or both to put on his shoulders. 'May I carry it on my shoulder in this world and in that if this ground isn't mine', or 'May I carry this stone and this earth and the whole wide world', he proclaimed as he swaggered off along what he said was the boundary line. Provided four or five witnesses were present this ended the dispute. Either oath was too solemn to be gainsaid. The second in particular was convincing: who would do anything as grave as to take the world on his shoulder for the sake of an erring rope in a measurer's hand? Four or five friends of both parties attended as witnesses. Fear of being asked to take this solemn oath was a considerable deterrent against disturbing the stones. Sometimes the older disputant took an oath, with or without earth or stone, that the disputed land was his, and so proved his title to it.

When the boundary had been recently delimited the disputants might consult their other neighbours, especially if these were older than they were themselves. Or they might ask the opinion of one, two or three very old men from another village as likely to be impartial. If they consulted only one, they had both to consent formally to employing him. Sometimes, when a dispute was dragging on interminably, an old man cut in with an offer to show them where the boundary was, with earth and a stone on his shoulder.

When friends or neighbours were called in they might settle the dispute by arguing. When old men were asked, they had to point out the boundary afresh but not till after they had taken earth and a stone on their shoulders and made a solemn oath to carry these through all eternity if they delimited falsely. When the old men were from the same villages as the disputants, they were unpaid; when from another village they were each given a Turkish pound.

627 By the second method of settlement[1] the elders in Munë took two
623 or three napoleons from each disputant as a pledge of his future
423 behaviour, and arranged for five or six elders as well as some

[1] [of boundary disputes—Analyst]

ordinary householders to meet at an early date at the boundary. In 623
presence of the assembled company the claimant swore with earth 627
and a stone on his shoulders that the boundary was where he said. 423
The elders then dug to see if they could find the stones. If they did they gave judgement in the claimant's favour and vice versa. If the losing disputant did not accept their ruling they kept his pledge. In Martanesh, according to Mr Lef Nosi, the case was entrusted to a single elder. First he tried to decide it by questioning the neighbours of the disputants. If he doubted what they said he put [695]
them to the ordeal of an oath on bread and the Koran. If he still thought one or more of them was lying he bade them set up the boundary stones where they wished. If they dared to do so he could say no more, but sometimes they jibbed at this final perjury and then his judgement prevailed. If the loser objected to his allowing the neighbours to mark the boundary, he hushed him by bidding him let them perjure themselves and then offering to indemnify him out of his own pocket for his loss, but here the elder was on safe ground. Shame prevented the loser from accepting this offer.

When the elders failed to effect a settlement the injured party in Shijan complained to the government—not always unsuccessfully. Shijan was so near Elbasan that the government's writ ran there even in Turkish times. In many other places, in modern as in Turkish times, it was thought that if elders had failed it was useless to apply to the government, and a shooting match began. In Lumë the man who had taken the oath with earth and a stone took the initiative. In a fury at finding he had risked his soul with an oath for nothing he apostrophized his absent enemy, 'I put the stone on my shoulder. You could have done it, but you wouldn't. Now I'll kill you.' When he succeeded the bitterest of feuds started. Sometimes for greater ignominy they beat each other with sticks. This too started a bitter feud.

When bigger units disputed a boundary each party generally 628
engaged an elder, paying him a fee of 250–500 grosh in Martanesh 623
in Mr Lef Nosi's time, against 50 for a quarrel between individuals. 423
Elders, disputants and witnesses crowded to the boundary, where the elders questioned and argued interminably. If they failed to come to an agreement, murder soon followed. When both sides were sickened by the shuttlecock of the feud they called in famous elders from another unit who could not possibly have an interest in

623 the matter and asked them to set up the boundary stones where they
628 thought right. But sometimes many lives had been lost in the
423 interval. Once the elders of Bytyç found, when summoned to intervene in a boundary dispute between Gash and Krasniqë, that in two days it had cost the lives of 124 men.

Characteristic processes often marked the arbitration. For example, when two village wards quarrelled in Çermenikë, the chief elders of the village summoned two of the oldest men in each and questioned them separately in the presence of witnesses. If their answers tallied, there could be no more question where the boundary lay. For ratification the old men were asked to walk along it, earth and stone on their shoulder, or to swear formally to its being the correct line. If there were discrepancies in their answers, the dispute was referred to the government authorities in Elbasan or, more probably, to elders from another village. If two villages of Kthellë quarrelled the three bajraktars went with the leading men and a sufficient number of hangers-on to the boundary. One village said where the line was, the other contradicted this. Finally, the most important of the bajraktars, lifting a stone set it on the shoulder of an old, wise, upright man and bade him set it down exactly on the boundary. When he had done so the line was established beyond controversy and no more murder could be done for it.[1]

423 To begin with the bloodshed method, if different villages or
628 tribes were involved, when men quarrelling over a boundary or
425 shepherds jostling over a grazing ground killed each other at the very time that the boundary was being delimited, there was no more need for elders. The tribal or village boundary was where heaps of stones marked the graves of the murdered men. If it was from a distance that they killed each other, the boundary of each village or tribe was by his grave and the ground in between became the common property of both. If one was only seriously wounded and was able to stagger or roll himself along into the foreign territory before he died, a cairn of stones was piled over him where he died, and though in foreign territory, became the boundary of his village or tribe. Boundaries so established were the most permanent; the

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[1] In Mirdite boundary disputes between villages and tribes were sometimes decided with bloodshed or a rock, obviously very primitive methods. Indeed the latter, a glorification of physical strength, seems to antedate the discovery of gunpowder.

greediest man would not venture to disturb the cairn or to steal 423 628
land for which another had lost his life. [425]

Near boundaries of villages and tribes might be won with a boulder and distant boundaries with a slab of rock. In the former event what was a contest in throwing the heavy weight took place; in so poor a country the weight could only be a stone. When the two tribes had quarrelled over a boundary each selected a champion athlete to throw the weight. Whichever threw it farthest won the land in dispute for the tribe. Father Gjeçov does not make it clear where the men stood for the throw. When more distant boundaries were in question, each champion carried a slab of stone or a rock on his back until he dropped under it. The one who held out longest won all the ground he had covered for his tribe.

The relations between a boundary and adjoining structures, such as a fence, wall or house, and natural features like hedges, trees and ditches, were as carefully regulated as the site of the boundary.

A fence or a wall generally enclosed a farmyard and sometimes 417
a field, a vineyard or the like. Fences were made of hurdles or, 351
much oftener, withered Christ's Thorn, depending on what grew in the locality. In the marshes at the mouth of the river Mat withies were interlaced between living willow trees planted like posts in the ditches surrounding the fields. In well-watered areas inland hedges of living Christ's Thorn were common. Walls were usually dry, like Scottish dykes; the more pretentious had their stones bedded in mud. Dry or mud, they were rare round fields, because fences were easier to make and less trouble to maintain. In upland pastures there were neither fences nor walls, presumably because the boundaries were too long. The rules for both fences and walls were pretty much the same.

When an old farmyard was divided between two brothers or 417
cousins who were on friendly terms, their respective portions were 423
separated only by boundary stones. When they were not on 596
friendly terms what they did depended on the degree of their enmity. If not embittered, they built a wall three spans wide (60 cm.) or a fence, centred exactly over the boundary line and possibly broken by a door that led from one yard to the other. Each built half of the barrier and became the recognized proprietor of what he built. When it was a wall he made a square niche on his own side to mark his ownership. When it was a fence he had no such material way of safeguarding his rights but could always rely on

423 little 'headland' which formed along the top of the lower field as
134 the plough-oxen turned in their ploughing.) It was vital to save
[241] the upper field from being undermined by the tillage of the lower
one. So the field-path (or headland) was always assigned to the
upper field, with the boundary and the fence, if any, along its
lower edge. The upper man was strictly forbidden to work the
path, generally grass-grown, and so fairly cohesive. The lower man
was even more strictly forbidden to cultivate right up to the path
for fear he brought it down; since his own land slipped a little
lower every year as he tilled it, the field-path soared higher above
it. Only if the lower field was in grass did the law revert to its
usual form. If the upper field was planted with maize and the
lower one a grass meadow, all the land under the boundary stones
belonged to the lower field because grass is in itself binding enough
to stop landslides.

If a road or an irrigation channel divided the two fields, the
upper bank belonged in most places to the upper man, and the
lower to the other, since there seemed no risk that cultivation of
the lower field would undermine the upper one. In Greater
[312] Dibër, however, no risks were taken. Both banks of an irrigation
channel were given to the upper man in case the lower one worked
too close to it. In any area, the owner of a lower field who made
a drain for it had to make it four finger-breadths from his own
boundary to make sure it did not damage the upper field.

[342] If building a new house, the owner of the lower field had to keep it far enough away from the boundary to do no damage to the fence, as any such damage would make the upper field slip. On the other hand, the owner of the upper field had licence to build his house as close to the fence as if the site were flat, that is to say, with only half the width of a footpath intervening, but he was never foolhardy enough to do so.

Sometimes it was the lower man who received protection from the law. In Martanesh, for example, when the upper one built a fence or wall round his field, he had to leave the boundary stones as well clear of it as if the field were flat. This was in case it moved and encroached on the boundary.

422 Sometimes a fence was misplaced. Even if it was only one cm.
628 inside the neighbour's land, it had to be moved. In Bicaj the
neighbour sent a mutual friend to say so to the owner; if the latter
ignored the message the neighbour took down the fence and saw

that when next it was erected it was correctly sited, otherwise 423
shooting began. 628 In the Martanesh area the village headman, with two official and two unofficial assistants, was usually called in to set the fence up on the exact boundary line. If the offender moved it forward again, the elders sent word to his relatives that if he touched it again, there would be shooting. So restrained, he usually settled down.

An opening was never to be made in a fence by force or without [685] the owner's leave. Only a foolish and 'lawless' man would do such a thing; it could only be the preliminary to using the field as a road, or to stealing something.

Fines were imposed as a deterrent. These amounted to 50 grosh in Turkish times and 100 koronë in the 1920's in the Malësi e Madhe, with 150 grosh and 3 rams in Kastrat in 1892; even if the offender closed the gap again, he had no right to make it in the first instance. If he destroyed a fence altogether in the marshes at the mouth of the Mat he was fined 250 grosh, five times the amount imposed for opening a way through it. If he did not pay the fine he was killed by the owner. As many as three lives have often been lost for one opening.

So with a wall in the marshland of the Mat. If it was holed, the owner asked the offender furiously if he was agreeable to having elders assess the damage. If the offender objected to assessment or refused payment, the owner shot him; at best he was sharply fined by the village. A breach in a fence or wall had always to be repaired by the owner.

Elsewhere manners were milder. In Martanesh there was no punishment at all for making a hole in a fence. In Perlat permission to make one was readily given either as a favour or in exchange for a passage through the other man's. In Fulqet a traveller could [491] make one without leave if the highway was deep in mud and the only dry ground within reach was the field behind the fence. Often enough the owner of fence and field shot at him, but this was illegal; there was only one legitimate way of keeping the traveller to the muddy road. This was for the owner of field and fence to fill up the holes in the road with stones. If he took this trouble and the traveller still trespassed on his field he had full right to shoot him.

A 'bajraktar' of tender years could evict a greybeard commoner 576
from the corner seat, and the greybeard would be distressed if 554
left in it. A worthless and ignorant 'bajraktar' got the head of
the roast lamb while successful and learned commoners had no
precedence by right—they belonged to their father's tribe and
were counted aliens in the bajraktar's. Sometimes, however, the
tribesmen gave them precedence as a courtesy.

When a bajraktar or any male in his family, infants excepted, 764
died in his bed, a black flag was stuck at the head of his grave to
mark his rank during life. Otherwise he and his were treated in
death like ordinary mortals. If he himself was murdered, the 628
ensuing blood feud was no worse than it would have been for
a commoner—Lek had laid down that in death one man was as
good as another. Besides, another bajraktar succeeded him and
with the office continuing, the personality of the holder had no
special significance. His family alone had to show a sense of his
unusual importance; it could not stain its honour by accepting
blood money instead of killing the assassin. If a bajraktar was
killed by somebody in another tribe, his tribe undertook to hunt
down the assassin, but this was no more than it would have done
for any tribesman dead in comparable circumstances. Conversely,
when a bajraktar killed anyone, his victim's family sought his blood
precisely as they would have sought a commoner's.

As between bajraktars, seniority of the ancestor's appointment 576
determined precedence. Gjejaj of Dukaj, the first bajraktar in 554
Perlat, lived long before there was a bajraktar of Rrshen. His
modern representative was, as already said above, so weak that
Perlat had abandoned him to follow the Rrshen man's leadership.
Yet in everything social, by virtue of his ancestor's seniority,
he walked ahead of his supplanter. Once, however, a Kthellë
tribesman entertained all three bajraktars of his tribe together.
There is no record of how he seated them, but when the roast
lamb appeared, he split the head in two, gave the two halves to two
of the bajraktars and a shoulder to the third. Half a head being
reasonably equated to a shoulder, he thus gave equal honour to all
three men and did justice both to descent and to strength.

When a bajraktar encountered a beg, as a bey is called in north Albania, the latter sat in the corner because a beg is bigger than a bajraktar. When bajraktar and agha met, the bajraktar sat in the corner. Such a meeting was rare in the north owing to the paucity

554 of aghas. The title of agha was a courtesy title bestowed by the
576 populace. By special provision of the Turkish Government there had been hereditary aghas since the Turkish conquest at Botush in Yugoslav Kosovë; these, says their representative in Albania, took precedence of all bajraktars in Albania and Kosovë.

578 Given the pride of a bajraktar in his standard and of a 'first
628 family' in its descent, a clash between the two was not uncommon. When this took the form of an ordinary isolated quarrel, elders were called in from another tribe to judge between the disputants. Their own tribe did not venture to try the issue, knowing that it might suffer, as outside elders could not do, for an unwelcome judgement. If the elders failed to effect a settlement, shooting began between the parties, both bajraktar and 'first family' being followed by his own kin. A man related to both followed the one to whom he was more nearly related; this at least in theory. In practice they often showed a naive sense of which side their bread was buttered and joined the disputant with the stronger following.

628 Sometimes a long struggle for precedence developed between
662 'first family' tenacious of its ancient privileges and an ambitious
578 bajraktar. In Lurë, for instance, both the Catholic Zef Doçi of Lurë e Vjetër (Old Lurë) and the Mohammedan Ibrahim Gjoçi of Kreje had long been rivals of the Mohammedan bajraktar Hakik Aliu Meta. In 1926 Gjoçi had the largest following, because he maintained the tribe with surpassing generosity. Within a decade he ate himself out of house and home, and then lost nearly all his power, retaining only the tribesmen's affection and respect for his past benefits. He therefore ceased to hamper the ambitions of the bajraktar. Zef Doçi, the 'first family' in the whole tribe, was a more obstinate rival, as his power rested less on his lavish doles than on his descent and personal wisdom. Ancestor after ancestor had been 'captains' in Turkish times, whereas Gjoçi and Meta had never been 'captains' till created by King Zog. The bajraktar began by undermining Doçi's position with traditional doles. He sent sheep to the poor at every festival and went guarantee for them in the shops during crises such as weddings and burials. 'So they all follow me now', he told the visitor with disarming simplicity. He had resorted to direct action, seizing every chance to kill off the guns in Doçi's family. In 1933 some brigands, who had killed one of Llesh Doçi's men, were harboured in a mountain sheepfold by the bajraktar's shepherds. Together with Zef and other relatives,

Llesh ambushed the brigands and wounded one. As one of his men 628 was killed, the two sides were 'one and one', equalized, and could 578 have made peace. But the opportunity was too good for the 662 bajraktar to miss. By the law of the mountains Llesh should not have attacked the sheepfold until he had asked the bajraktar to withdraw his protection from the brigands and had met with a refusal. So the bajraktar vowed he would not make peace but would have Doçi's blood for the 'injury'. Soon he learned that Zef Doçi and all his male relatives were at a wedding in a poor man's house. Under cover of darkness his followers crept up to the house and shooting through the windows killed two and wounded four of the wedding guests. A year later the bajraktar managed to have a third man from Zef's family killed, leaving Zef almost alone.

In his charities this bajraktar of Lurë took no account of the 662 recipient's religion, helping a Catholic as readily as one of his fellow Mohammedans. If he discriminated between the two he would gain nothing from the Albanian government, which ignored religious differences. In Turkish times discrimination in favour of Mohammedans would have furthered his designs by winning approval from the Turkish government. He found, however, that the proved loyalty of his family to King Zog's stood him in even better stead. A marriage had also proved a useful asset. Metë Hoti, the best shot in Lurë, would have been expected to join Zef Doçi, because his mortal enemy, Dalip Kaci, followed Zef's enemy, the bajraktar. Unfortunately for Zef, Metë had a sister married to one of the bajraktar's household. Since joining Zef meant shooting at the bajraktar's men, Metë feared to have the blood of his nephews on his hands and continued reluctantly, side by side with his mortal enemy, to follow the bajraktar.

The result of the struggle can be shown by the numbers of the [701] levies raised by the three captains for the Albanian government in 1926, 1933 and 1935 respectively. They were as follows:

| | 1926 | 1933 | 1935 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Zef Doçi | 150 | 50 | 23 |
| Ibrahim Gjoçi | 300 | 40 | 32 |
| Bajraktar | 4 | 300 | 400 |

It would have been interesting to revisit Lurë to see the effect 000 on the position established by the Italian occupation. The bajraktar,

534 between him and themselves on those grounds. Provided he was
613 correctly descended from the master of the ancestral household
622 through a succession of what were conventionally called 'eldest' brothers, and were really the most competent, they accepted him as their elder as unquestioningly as the English nation accepts its king. Sometimes a new elder seemed unfit for his duties. Then the others took him with them when they went to work, and told him how his dead father judged or arbitrated: the most telling and least offensive method of training him.

622 When a dispute occurred it was the duty of the aggrieved party
628 to inform his brotherhood elder first of all. When he did so and the
613 matter was trifling and lay between two members of his brotherhood, this elder judged the case out of hand. If the disputants belonged to different brotherhoods, he consulted with the elder of the second brotherhood. When the case was graver he carried it to his kin elder, who might judge it straight away or carry it to the village elder. The village elder might in his turn pronounce judgement forthwith or call a General Assembly of the village in order to thrash the matter out in public and get a backing for any decision taken. Often the aggrieved party went straight to the village elder who was accessible to all tribesmen. In that event neither his kin nor his brotherhood had the right to resent the man's going over their heads. Moreover, the village elder's superiority was so well established that no resentment was likely to be felt. In no case was it lawful for an aggrieved man to seek advice from an elder in an outside village before he had consulted one of his own. If a kin elder or the brotherhood elders in the kin oppressed others in the village it was the duty of the village elder to repress them; and he had the right to summon the elders of the other kins in the village, if necessary, to his support. Article 10 in the Convention of Kurbin[1] betrays a strong feeling that there must be no shooting until the village elder has been informed of the dispute and given a chance to settle it by quieter means.

623 Elders could also act collectively. In the old days no new law could be passed, nor any judgement affecting their social unit be pronounced, unless they were present and gave their approval. When the bajraktar summoned a General Assembly for such important purposes as concluding a truce, trying a serious case or enacting new laws of tribal behaviour, their attendance was

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[1] See Appendix, Document XI, p. 271.

695 asked if they were willing to accept this. In the most fortunate event the disputants consented and the elders communicated their decision. Each then said to his own man, 'Now bring me my dues and I'll return your pledge'. As soon as his fee was paid he gave back his pledge to his client. If the disputant had no ready money for the fee, a common enough occurrence, he said he would wait a month or two, provided that the disputant could find someone to go bail for him. When the term he had fixed was up without bringing payment of his fee, he sold the pledge and so recouped himself. If he got rather more for the pledge than the amount of his fee the disputant had no right to claim the extra money. The elder never sold the pledge before the date he had fixed. If within the term he fixed the disputant found enough money for his fee, he was no longer allowed to pay it directly but had to transmit it through his guarantor, who in return brought back his pledge from the elder. Sometimes the guarantor saw that the disputant would never be able to redeem his pledge and paid the elder's fee for him. Unfortunately, elders had no power behind them with which to enforce their judgement. Their work was in fact arbitration rather than judging in the English sense. It was, therefore, common for elders in central Albania to communicate their findings to the disputants and then to add, 'Now settle the matter as you like. We have decided that this one of you is in the right.' Too often the
● 628 loser shot his successful rival, so starting a bad blood feud. Pjetër Gjoni of Theth had his house burgled, and the thief bribed the elders into putting too low a value on the stolen property, assessing it at two napoleons. Pjetër, who had already spent one napoleon on finding out who had been the thief, declared immediately that he would not abide by this judgement and killed the thief. In revenge the thief's family burned down Pjetër's house and carried off all his cattle.

696 Naturally many attempts were made to prevent such sequels to judgements. In Martanesh, Selim Peshku kept the pledges of both disputants for a time. This was against the rules, but Peshku had the peace of the community at heart and made 'anything for peace' his motto. In Zerqan all the elders in the village would meet and would fine a recusant before he could shoot the successful litigant. Sometimes in the same village the two elders refused to deliver judgement until the disputants had promised to abide by it and had each found a guarantor who undertook to see that they kept their

682 The following story told by Miss Durham[1] throws light upon
628 the mind of a tribe on this point:*

In the spring of 1908 a tribesman of Gjan, quarrelling with a tribesman of neighbouring Shosh, snatched a firebrand from the hearth and flung it in his face. It would have been bad enough to kill the man of Shosh, but it was worse to insult him with such a blow. The Gjan man, fearing the wrath to come, fled with all speed. The Shosh man was so enraged that, unable to catch the actual culprit and clear his honour by shooting him, he went to Gjan and shot 'an unhappy little boy, unarmed and but eight years old'...'whose only crime was that he belonged to the same tribe as the offender'....'Gjan was filled with rage. That Shosh had the right to take blood of any man of the tribe they freely admitted, but to kill a child was dishonourable.' On the following Whit Sunday a General Assembly of Shosh met to debate the case. 'Shosh was violently indignant over the affair and public opinion ran so high that the murderer had not dared to remain in the tribe but had fled. The *Mexhlis* now was held to decide whether his house should be burnt as punishment. Many were in favour of this. The difficulty was that there was no law under which this could be done. The blood had been taken *outside* the tribe; it was therefore not a crime against the tribe and not punishable by it. The duty of vengeance lay with the dead boy's family. All agreed that if they liked to come and fire the house Shosh would not oppose it. But as the near relatives were a crippled father and a child they were incapable of executing justice in the face of the opposition which would certainly be put up by the murderer's family. The question caused great excitement. The burning of the house would entail passing a new law to punish a man for a crime against another tribe. This would mean an entire reconstruction of the code and nothing less than considering themselves as a nation, and not as detached tribes.' Miss Durham asked 'whether it were not possible at least to pass a law to punish any man killing a child not of age to bear arms'. It was pointed out that if Shosh did so and neighbour tribes did not, Shosh would be at a disadvantage....The question was discussed for two days, and was undecided when Miss Durham left.

793 Proceedings at a General Assembly terminated in Catholic areas
212 with the drawing up of minutes by the priest, the only man present

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[1] See *Some Tribal Origins* etc., p. 165.

*[i.e. a ban on introducing innovations in tribal law--Analyst]

671 *Tomori* on 7 November 1942. The greater part of this document deals with an entirely new situation and the methods by which the people of Mat undertake to adapt themselves to it. But even in this document there appears the familiar restatement of old laws against the familiar crimes of murder, theft and the abduction of women.

681 Differences in the penalties laid down for the same offence may possibly point to social and economic differences among the tribes. For example, in Nikaj, Shalë and Curraj (Documents VII and VIII) a defaulting debtor is to be deprived of civil rights and may be killed or robbed unless he meets his obligations. In Kastrat (V) he is fined twenty-three grosh as a defaulter, but much more heavily fined if his sureties have to pay his debt. Nikaj was a poorer area than Kastrat, and that fact may explain to some extent the difference in penalty. The treatment of stealing also differs as between Kastrat and Shalë which was the poorer of the two. In Kastrat the robber of another's house or sheepfold is to be fined 500 grosh and five rams, but in Shalë (X) the thief who steals a single animal—a ewe, a goat, a cow—is to have 'his harvest burnt, his fields plucked bare and his grain panniers smashed'.

628
682 Some stories related by Father Gjeçov illustrate the application and development of the law. About 1860 a villager of Fregënë in the Mirditë tribe of Dibër told a neighbour to kill a certain man and promised that when the time came to pay the blood money he would see to it. On the faith of this promise, the neighbour ambushed the man on the high road and shot him dead. A little later, Captain Bibë Doda, the Gjomarkaj of the day, went on tour for the purpose of composing current blood feuds. The Fregënë feud came up, among others, and the murderer was ordered to rebuild his victim's house by way of paying blood money. He asked his evil counsellor for the money he had promised, but the latter declined to pay. Captain Bibë and the heads of the tribe summoned this man, and asked him if he had told his neighbour to commit the murder and promised to pay the blood money. The man dared not deny doing so. Then Captain Bibë, together with the bajraktar of Dibër and other heads, reasoning that 'lips can't land a man in a blood feud' and 'words don't make a funeral', made it law that 'Murder depends on the finger'; that is to say, the murderer who must pay with his life or money for the crime is the man whose finger pulled the trigger. They then sentenced the Fregënë murderer to pay blood money for his crime, saying that

while he had gone to the ambush by another's instructions he had 628 walked there on his own legs. As the instigator of the crime had 682 broken his promise about paying the blood money, they sentenced him to have his house burned down by the tribe.

On one occasion Lek Dukagjini had come at Skanderbeg's [649 invitation to discuss some blood feuds at a General Assembly of all the tribes in the land. Skanderbeg opposed the principle of 'a life [654] for a life' on the grounds that all men were *not* equal; the blood of a physically fine man was different from that of a poor type. At Lek's suggestion, however, he inquired of his mother, upon oath, what sort of a man his father had been. On learning that he had been a poor type, Skanderbeg at the next Assembly agreed to the principle of equality!

About 1870, when Kolë Prenga the Great was Captain of 688 Mirditë, a jar of butter was stolen from the church house in Orosh 696 during the priest's absence. On his return his servant, who had also been away at the time, informed him of the theft. The priest, a Franciscan, informed the bajraktar of Orosh. The latter convened the tribe (*bajrak*) but no one confessed to the theft. The bajraktar then informed Captain Kola. The captain undertook to track down the culprit, and one day ordered the tribe to assemble on the open space in front of the church at Orosh. In spite of Captain Kola's questions no one came forward to confess to the crime. Then Captain Kola, together with the chiefs of the tribe, sentenced the unknown thief to death and banishment from the tribe; his house, too, was to be destroyed and his land left uncultivated. Not long afterwards the thieves were discovered. They were two young men of Orosh, Prengë Kolë Marku and another whose name has been forgotten. Captain Kolë Prenga the Great again ordered the tribe to assemble, one man from every house, at the church at Orosh. The two young men also came by order to the meeting. Captain Kola read out the sentence that had previously been pronounced. The two thieves were stood in the middle of an open space, unarmed and with their hands folded at the waist. The tribe stood up awaiting the captain's order to fire. But the priest, filled with pity for the culprits, begged the captain, the chiefs and the commoners to grant them their lives. This was done, they paid money to the church for their sacrilege, returned twice the quantity of what they had stolen, paid the usual fine and were expelled from the tribe.

619 offenders, banishing others, and executing the ringleaders if these
672 had committed any crime entailing the death penalty.

619 Sometimes a village went to actual war with the rest of the tribe.
[721] As it never did so unless it knew itself to be very strong, the rest of the tribe was sometimes unable to reduce it. If the tribe was alone, the war went on until both sides were exhausted enough to cry halt. If the tribe was one of a group its heads could call in all the men of the other tribes to reduce the belligerent. In Mirditë a Gjomarkaj called the General Assembly which decided on this step, and led its members against the belligerent.

Sometimes, like a pestilent village, a tribe that formed part of a group made itself a nuisance to its neighbours. In that case the
[681] General Assembly of the other tribes in the group sentenced it wholesale to the usual penalties—fines for mild offenders, burning out for medium offenders and death for bad offenders. A whole tribe, however, could not be banished. It could only be ostracized, cut off from all intercourse with its neighbours; this penalty lasted until it consented to furnish the usual pledges for its future behaviour.

623 Village Assemblies dealt with matters of exclusively village interest. They regulated wood-cutting and irrigation rights, for example. They fixed the date at which beasts might be sent up to their summer pasturage on the high mountains. They stipulated the number of beasts that might be sent up by each family. They took steps to see that no one appropriated more than his fair share of forest, irrigation water or grazing. In so doing they made a valuable contribution to the public peace. Some aspects of
[682] murder also engaged their attention. The actual crime and revenge
[628] for it were the concern only of the families of the murderer and his victim. But it was the concern of the village that the range of revenge should not spread, increasing the number of avenging assassinations and so disturbing the village peace. So the law having laid down that the avenger must allow the murderer a day or two's grace to settle up his affairs before he was besieged in his house, the village had to extract a promise of this grace from the avenger. In cases where the grace lasted for thirty days, the village had to see that the murderer did not abuse his privilege and harry the victim's family. If he showed any such tendency, the village in General Assembly had to fine him and bring his period of grace to an untimely end.

695 be put to the oath; such an ordeal was not for boys under twenty, old men over sixty, women, gipsies or lunatics. All of these were [562] considered so irresponsible that even their sworn word carried no [592] weight. One exception comes from Zerqan, where a woman accused of a petty theft like stealing a dress might take an oath in the semi-privacy of her home that she was innocent. If her fault was more serious, her oath was not accepted. A man—her husband [672] or son or, failing these, her brother—had to take one for her, as he would have done for his senile father or his infant son. Another exception occurred in family oaths, as described later. But this exception was apparent rather than real. The infant boys who were present did not themselves take the oath. The master alone repeated the words dictated; the boys and other males were present solely to be implicated to the maximum extent possible in the dread consequences of perjury.

In criminal cases it was the suspect, the man who denied an accusation, who had to take the oath. In such cases its sole purpose was to clear him of suspicion; if he could take it, he was acquitted, and if he could not, he was convicted. The accuser was never allowed to support his accusation by an oath; even if he insisted that with his own eyes he had seen the crime being committed, he could not swear upon oath that what he said was true. For motives of spite might have induced him first to accuse his neighbour falsely, and then to swear a false oath. So the law said firmly 'It's for the denier to take the oath'.

695 Occasionally a suspect refused to take the oath. Then his 628 accuser was at least tempted to shoot him. If it was a case of stealing he had to think twice; shooting the suspect would start a blood feud because 'murder for a fault (like stealing) isn't allowed', and perhaps the lost property was not worth the nuisance which the blood feud would cause. If it was a murder case, it did not much matter if he did shoot the suspect; he was already at feud with the murderer. In property cases refusals to take the oath seem to have been unknown when the dispute was in the hands of elders; if they ordered a disputant to take an oath, he dared not disobey for he knew that the whole community would gather to enforce the order. If one disputant, before the case had reached the elders, asked the other to take an oath that the property was his, his request was refused as often as not, and then shooting became inevitable.

682 as suicide so that he escaped with his life, and that was the commonest
627 result, he was treated as 'a low-class fellow', visited by
593 none but bad characters, and, if a Mohammedan, never given the
greeting 'Peace be with thee'. In Mirditë, always more rigorous than other districts, he was considered so anti-social that he was either killed or expelled in perpetuity by his kinsmen, or, according to another version, by the whole village along with his kinsmen.

606 The murder of certain relatives did not concern the family. Thus,
628 if a man murdered a relative by marriage, such as his son-in-law,
father-in-law, wife's brother, or sister's husband, the crime ranked as an ordinary murder and was expiated with a life or with blood money. The marriage tie was disregarded; the important point was that, unlike two brothers living under separate roofs, murderer and
[581] victim belonged to different families. Such murders were very
rare, for marriage relationships were always contracted to secure a valued friend, and no Albanian in his senses ever threw a friend lightly away. Again, if a man murdered his maternal uncle or his sister's son, murderer and victim belonged to different families, and blood money at least was payable for the crime. The contingency rarely arose, since a maternal uncle was regarded as a father and a sister's son as one's own child.

623 If a woman was taken in adultery, and her husband killed her and
837 her paramour together—'kerchief and cap together'—he incurred
[illegible] no feud; their deaths went unavenged; it was a case of 'blood for
593 blood', one equal to the other. To prove them guilty he sent for his
wife's brother and her lover's brother to see them both lying dead; his message would run, 'I killed her because I caught her sinning'. The wife's brother would hand him a cartridge, saying, 'Here is a cartridge for my sister. Bravo for doing this'. The paramour's nearest relatives came to the house, drank coffee, and took away the corpse; the murderer accompanied them to their house, drank coffee, and so peace was established between them. If the paramour's brother was 'a gentleman', 'a man', he would give a cartridge to the husband, saying, 'I pardon your crime because my brother has sinned'. Even the father of the paramour might say to the murderer, 'A blessing on your rifle', and give him coffee as a sign that there was peace between them. In modern times the government accepted the evidence of the two bodies lying together and punished the husband with no more than two or three weeks' imprisonment.

This custom of the wife's brother giving a cartridge to a husband 684
who had murdered his erring wife explains the phrase often heard 607
in Albania, 'a bride with a cartridge on her back'. In Martanesh it 682
was an old, but long disused, custom to tie a cartridge on the back [585]
of a bride's veil as she left her father's house; this cartridge she
was to give to her husband on her wedding night, and he would
keep it against the day when he found her unfaithful and then kill
her with it. This custom, if it existed elsewhere, has been forgotten,
but the phrase is universally known.

In Lumë, if a husband suspected his wife of illicit love-making, [627]
he could not tell her people because he was being disgraced. He
could only lie in wait till he caught the pair together and then kill
them. Sometimes when he could not catch them together, he [586]
divorced her; in one instance a man did so on the insistence of his
kinsmen, who thought themselves as well as the husband disgraced
by the wife's notoriously loose living. He admitted that he could
not manage her, divorced her for the sake of the family honour, and
then, being too poor to pay the bride-price of another wife, lived
alone. Divorcing the wife also ensured that the husband ran no risk
of having a feud with either her brother or her lover's family. The
Highlanders held similar views—the husband could not question
his wife or tell her lover not to come to the house; he could again
do nothing but lie in wait until he caught them. A few Highlanders
held that the husband might inform her people of her misconduct;
if they believed him, they would say, 'Kill her', or perhaps kill her
themselves; in either case her death went unavenged. They [587]
preferred to kill such a wife for they were Catholics in the main,
and as such could not remarry if they divorced their wife. As it was
permissible in Martanesh to kill the guilty pair separately, an
adulterous wife was never divorced but always killed. If a woman [627]
was divorced in Mat, her brother always asked what wrong she had
done; if she had been an adulteress, he killed her, provided that
the husband first killed the lover. In north-east Albania, if the
lover was the husband's brother, divorce was thought the easiest
way out. Only an exceptionally brutal man would kill his brother;
the average man would prefer to say to his wife, 'You have committed
this sin, and are divorced'.

If the husband killed only his wife, her brother avenged her 593
death in most cases; without seeing his sister dead by her lover's side 607
he was unwilling to believe in her guilt and apt to think the husband 628
684

[607] had killed her out of ill-will. After her brother had killed a male
628 from his house, the husband would kill both her brother and her
684 lover; then peace would be made between all three families. In
593 Martanesh and Lumë if the husband did not kill the lover as well, the wife's brother, when threatening vengeance, would say, 'You killed the bitch; why didn't you kill the dog also?'

[606] Sometimes a husband had not the courage or the heart to kill his wife; then perhaps his people killed her. Or perhaps he sent word to her father that he had found her sinning and asked him to kill her. But the father generally replied to such husbands, 'Kill her yourself, because I gave her to you to look after'. If the wife suspected this interchange of messages, she might run away to her father. In that case her husband sent him word saying, 'Either kill that bitch or see me destroy you root and branch': The father then either killed her or sent her to her husband to kill. If the father protected the wife, a blood feud began between him and the husband, for the latter could not bear the world to think that he had swallowed such a disgrace.

In Martanesh, it should be noted, it was permissible, as it was not elsewhere, to kill the lover and the wife separately, if they could not be found together. This seems to have been the case in Dibër also. About 1916 a man in Vleshjë (Dibër) found his wife unfaithful and killed the lover. The wife ran away, but the husband caught her, poured paraffin on her, and burned her alive, yet seems to have escaped her brother's vengeance.

684 If the outraged husband killed only the lover, then he had to fear
682 vengeance from the lover's family. In Lumë on the principle that
628 'vengeance is not abandoned because of guilt', vengeance was sometimes taken by a 'bad' brother for a man killed in adultery. He might kill the husband, forgive him, or demand blood money.

776 A gruesome story of collective punishment of a guilty pair comes
684 from Martanesh. About 1912 a young man was caught with a
627 young wife. The 'circle' of the young man took him and the 'circle' of the wife took her out to an appointed spot where they stood them up together. The youth's uncle shot him dead, and the girl's brother shot her, while the drums beat and the other men danced. The honour of the two families being thus cleared, they buried the two close together, but in separate graves, at cross-roads; no hoxha was present to commit them to the grave, nor were they washed and changed. In the neighbouring Zdrâjshë also a guilty

couple were buried in any sort of hole, but in separate graves [766]
without a hoxha or being washed on boards and changed. In Lumë 684
other customs prevailed. Both were buried in the cemetery in the 627
ordinary way, unless they had been caught outside in some wood
or thicket, in which case they were buried where they were killed.

Public opinion is growing against such double murders. It was [582]
too often the custom to give young girls to old men, with the
inevitable result that the young wives were apt to fall in love with
men more of their own age and had therefore to be killed by their
fathers.

At Zdrâjshë, when a bride was found on marriage to be pregnant 836
by another man, the unusually mild divorced her at once, but the 625
general rule was to have her killed. The groom locked up the bride,
sent for her father, and bade him find her lover. The father always 606
asked for three or four days' respite during which he made inquiries. 684
If the bride had indeed done wrong, an honest father sought out and 593
killed the lover and then came to shoot his own daughter. Or
perhaps he gave the bridegroom a cartridge and bade him shoot her
with it. All the principles involved are well illustrated by a story [184]
from Lurë, still the most undisciplined of all Albanian tribes.
About 1928 Metë Hoti, having taken a bride from Vehib Runa in
Gur, found her within three months of bearing a child by another
man. He sent her back to her father, bidding him find the lover and
kill them both. The father would not kill his daughter and persisted [672]
in his refusal in spite of Metë's threats to kill the whole family if he
did not do so. The father's kinsmen supported Metë, and when he
came one night and killed the father, mother, daughter and infant
and four other people in the house, they refused to avenge these
deaths because the father had transgressed against the unwritten
law. For the same reason the government merely imprisoned Metë
for a few months.

A woman might be killed for various reasons by a man in her 682
husband's or her father's family. For example, her husband or his 562
representative had leave to kill her for heinous crimes like adultery, 596
incorrigible pilfering, or murdering one of his relatives, but if they 628
killed her for any other reason, her father killed one of them. Two [593]
principles were involved: one, that a man bought only the services
of his wife and not her life; the other, that a woman retained till
her dying day her right to protection by her father's family. Her
son by the murderer could not avenge her, because killing his

682 father, his only means of doing so, was forbidden. Her son by
562 another husband, belonging as he did to another family, was free
628 to avenge her. If a woman's son killed her for any but the above
596 heinous crimes, her husband could not avenge her, since to do so
[607] he must kill his son. In Mirditë her brother could kill her son or other male in his family, but elsewhere it was held that her brother was as helpless as her husband because her son was a nearer relative and her nearest relative having killed her, her blood must be lost. If she was married for the second time and was killed by the son of her former marriage, her husband could kill his stepson, but as before, her brother's hands were tied, except in Mirditë, by the law of nearest relative.

When a man killed his brother's wife for any other reason than those stated above, her husband took no action if he and the murderer had not separated; the murder was a family affair. Her brother, however, killed one of them. If the two brothers had separated, the murderer had to pay blood money to her husband. If the husband did not exact it within a year, her brother killed either the murderer or her husband. Her husband never killed his brother: 'I'd never kill my brother for the sake of my wife', was a common saying.

When a woman was killed by her father or brother, her blood was always lost by the rule of nearest relative. If she was married, her husband did not, in most districts, continue friendly relations with the murderer, but in some, such as Krasniqë, he asked him for
[584] another girl and on receiving her forgot his annoyance at the other's murder. The same was true if the murdered woman was only betrothed, for a betrothed girl 'is counted the man's wife'. When a woman was killed by some other man in her own family, by her uncle or her nephew for instance, by the rule of nearest relative her
[593] blood was lost if she was neither married nor betrothed. If she was either and was not killed for a heinous crime, her husband felt he had been disgraced and avenged her by killing a male in her family.

When murders were committed by women, the situation was complicated by the fact that women belonged to two families, their husband's and their father's.

[672] If a woman murdered her husband, both his family and her father's were involved. The important factor was her motive, which was usually love for another man who had probably bought the necessary rat poison in the bazaar. If her lover was her

husband's brother, she married him and her husband's blood was 682
lost exactly as if he had died by his brother's hand. If her lover 562
was an outsider, her husband's brother killed her. He had the 628 ●
right to do so, woman though she was, for a question of honour 596
was involved, and for questions of honour women might lawfully be put to death. Her son by the dead man could not kill the murderess because matricide is not allowable. Her husband's son by another wife was under no such inhibition, for he was only her stepson and therefore no relative. If her father's family believed in her adulterous motive, they sent a cartridge to her husband's brother, thereby signifying that they gave him leave to kill her and would not avenge her death. If they did not believe in the alleged motive, they avenged her by killing a man in her husband's family and an unusually bitter feud resulted.

Sometimes her husband's brother was too high-spirited or too angry to rest content with killing the murderess and killed one of her male relatives as well; he would plead that a woman's blood could never equal a man's and that her male relatives were responsible
for her misdeeds. Sometimes a murderess escaped alive to her [591]
father's house. In that case she was held to have escaped from the suzerainty of her husband's family and became a stranger; as a stranger she must expiate her crime, but her sex shielded her personally and threw the onus of expiation on her male relatives—'Women don't have blood feuds'. Her husband's brother was therefore bound to kill one of her relatives. To avoid losing a male
for his daughter's crime her father sometimes killed her himself, [628]
a desperate act that always satisfied her husband's brother.

A woman rarely murdered any other man than her husband. If [593]
she did murder her brother, it was assumed that it had happened by accident as he was her surest protector. There are no records of the murder of father or paternal uncle by a woman.

The last category of murders within the family includes the very rare cases in which a woman murdered a woman in her husband's or her father's family. If she murdered her mother or her daughter, both most unlikely contingencies if she were sane, the victim's blood was lost by law of nearest relative. In all other cases the result depended on whether her victim was single or married. Thus the murder of her unmarried sister, paternal aunt, brother's daughter, counted as a suicide and the victim's blood was lost. If she murdered her husband's sister, the victim's blood was again

582 lost because the only possible avenger was the woman's husband,
562 who was not likely to kill the wife, who had cost him good money, for
● 628 the sake of his sister, though he was more likely to do so for the sake
596 of his father or brother. If she murdered a married woman of her
[607] own kin, her victim's husband exacted blood money from the males
of her family or perhaps another girl. If she murdered a married woman in her husband's kin, his brother's wife, for example, or her own brother's wife, her victim's brother exacted blood money or even a life from the males in her family.

When a woman killed the wife of her husband's brother, her victim's husband had to suffer the loss of his chattel in silence. He could not kill the murderess because a man might not kill his brother's wife for any reason other than adultery or thieving. Nor could he kill her husband because a man might not kill his own brother. In his default his wife was avenged by her brother, who might kill either him or his brother if they were not separated, but only him if they were. Whatever the issue, her sex saved the murderess from expiating her crime.

[606] When a woman killed her mother-in-law or her daughter-in-law, her sex again saved her from expiating the crime. Her victim's brother was the only possible avenger, for no member of her husband's family could kill the murderess for anything except adultery and thieving. The avenger could kill any male in the family of the murderess; the marriage relationship did not count.

*351 628 the loopholes. A still richer man, or one with many enemies, had several doors in his courtyard wall and watch-towers at strategic points. (The turrets at each corner and in the middle of the long walls effectually commanded these entrances, and many loopholes in the walls provided space for many defenders to shoot from.) Shevqet Bey Verlaci of Elbasan had several posterns in his garden wall, each commanded by a watch-tower and each providing him in case of need with a possible means of escape.

*628 574 Incidentally, back entrances in the mountains were useful for guests with enemies. These could enter unseen by other guests, among whom there might be one or more who would inform the enemy of his whereabouts, and so endanger his life. They were also useful if the master had sent a group of his followers to shoot his enemy; if they failed, they could creep in unseen by the guests; in case of failure on such an errand, they did not wish the attempt to be known.

● 628 A wanted man who wished to work in his fields might station a child herding goats or a woman minding a cow at a vantage point where an enemy could be detected and the watcher give him warning, so that he might seize his rifle and defend himself. As the enemy's trump card was surprise, he was likely to retreat when detected. Before the wanted man left the house the women and children would look through the windows to make sure no enemy was near. A man with blood on his hands might wish to go to the forest to cut firewood, a place too distant for his women to keep watch. In that case he might send a scout ahead to reconnoitre the
[426] road, and himself follow rifle in hand. In Zdrâjshë, Çermenikë, the
[423] communal hay-field was so far away that a wanted man made no attempt to go and cut his hay; the others, however, gave him his due share, though he had done nothing to earn it. A man who, in spite of risks, kept moving about might never stir outside, especially at night, without his rifle. He never told where he was going and travelled by an unlikely route and at unwonted times.

*628 484 In the summer of 1935, to return from Tirana, whither he had been officially summoned, Murat Kaloshi of Dibër sent out an attendant to find a car willing to drive at once to Dibër, and within five minutes of its drawing up at the door of his lodging started. This was at 2 p.m., an hour when Tirana is plunged in sleep on a summer afternoon. He supped at the wayside inn of Lunik, an insignificant village without telegraphic communication, four or

[Laws enacted in the village of Kastrat on Nov. 2, 1891]

5. Whoever moves the stones of an old boundary and puts them in a new place will be fined 3000 grosh and 6 rams. 681 [423]

6. No one is to frighten a flock sheltering from the heat in a place it was in first.[1] Whoever does this will be fined 250 grosh and 3 rams. [233]

7. The mill question remains inviolate as always and neither the Vukpalaj nor the Gjolaj may start a *degamë*,[2] and any miller who takes more than 5 per cent of the flour will be fined 500 grosh and 6 rams. [256]

8. Any man who cuts down a tree under which animals take shelter from the heat or cuts off a mill or an irrigation stream will be fined 500 grosh and 6 rams.

9. Other fountains and springs are left under the old law, that is to say, whoever destroys a fountain or spring or prevents another from filling water-pots will be fined 500 grosh. [312]

10. Milling is by order of arrival. Any miller who mills for a man who comes later than another and breaks the order either out of favouritism or because corrupted by bribes will be fined 150 grosh and 3 rams. [256]

11. Whoever admits a stranger to huts on a mountain pasturage will be fined 500 grosh and 6 rams.[3]

## IV. Truce Sworn between Nikaj and Mertur on August 10th, 1892. 628 619

(From Father Gjeçov, *Kanùn*, p. 121.)

The two tribes have sworn a truce with each other:

(1) As from August 14th up to the day of Our Lady of Mertur.
(2) As from December 26th up to the day of St Sebastian.

The guarantors of Flock and Shepherd, i.e. Nikaj and Mertur and the Bajraktars of Krasniqë and Gash.

## V. Laws Enacted in Kastrat and Bajzë on November 1st, 1892 A.D. 681

(From Father Gjeçov, *Kanùn*, p. 126.)

At a general meeting held under the presidency of Brahim Beg the serxherde, Kasem Beg the bylikbash and the four and twenty chiefs (elders) of Kastrat, the following laws were enacted.

1. Whoever murders a man of Kastrat or of any of the other mountains will be fined 3000 grosh and 24 rams.

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[1] This must be a mistranslation. The Italian version of the sentence runs: *che nessuno ardisa impaurire il bastiame gravido.*

[2] The Italian version of this very obscure clause is as follows: *Le disposizioni riguardanti i mulini rimangono inaltarate per sempre e non possono causare litigi nè fra il povero nè fra il ricco*, clearly referring to the principle, enunciated again in § 10, which compels the miller to treat all his clients on the principle of 'first come, first served'. It is possible that the Albanian version has been misunderstood.

[3] This refers to the letting of some of the tribe's scanty pasturage to strangers.

[Laws enacted in Kastrat and Bajzë on Nov. 1, 1892]

681 2. Wounding a man means a fine of 1500 grosh and 12 rams.

[627] 3. Whoever fines another without doing it through a General Assembly and by common consent, will be fined 1000 grosh and 10 rams.

4. Whoever disputes with another or calls him names or aims his rifle at him in the following places—Breg i Shpellës, Viri, and Krue i Ri—will be fined 1000 grosh and 10 rams.

5. Whoever breaks down another's hedge in order to make a patch for himself must pay 150 grosh (3 rams) to the owner of the hedge.

6. Whoever murders anyone on the high road will be fined 3000 grosh and 24 rams.

7. Whoever robs another's house or sheepfold will be fined 500 grosh and 5 rams.

8. Whoever dishonours a woman or an engaged girl will be fined 3000 grosh and 10 rams.

[692] 9. Whoever does not wish to engage elders and goes away saying 'May I never forgive you' will be fined 500 grosh and 5 rams.

[233] 10. Whoever lets his animals graze on another's land will be fined 250 grosh and 3 rams.

[423] 11. A man who will not hear of fencing in his portion of land, going halves in the fence with his neighbour, will be fined 250 grosh and 3 rams.

12. A man who does not meet his obligations at the term fixed will be fined 23 grosh.

13. Whoever steals an ox, a cow or a horse in his own village will be fined 500 grosh and 5 rams.

14. A man who does not respond to the village's call to come to a General Assembly or some other requirement of the village will be fined 250 grosh.

[487] 15. A man who closes a gap which has always been in the hedge will be fined 150 grosh.

[623] 16. The chiefs are to meet in General Assembly once a year, one week after St John's Day. Whoever does not conform to this decision will be fined 500 grosh.

[693] 17. 'Pledge elders' are not to take more than 10 grosh as their fee for a judgement, and commoners not more than 5 grosh.

[628] 18. Whoever murders his adversary after their feud has been compounded by order of the government will be fined 12 purses and expelled from the village and turned into a ghost.

681 231 19. A dog which enters a vineyard with a wooden collar on its neck may not be killed. A dog which enters a vineyard or field without a wooden collar may be killed.

20. Whoever brings a house-dog with him to church or to Shpellë will be fined 50 grosh.

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

[Laws enacted in Kastrat and Bajzë on Nov. 1, 1892]

Whoever brings pigs or sheep to Shpellë will be fined 50 grosh. 681

Whoever washes clothes at Shpellë will be fined 50 grosh.[1] [231]

21. A man who leaves his sureties to pay his debt is to pay a fine of 225 grosh to his creditor and 150 grosh to the chiefs and 5 rams. [296]

## VI. Supplement dated 1894.

(From Father Gjeçov, *Kanùn*, pp. 124–5.)

1. Whoever takes a woman to live with him without marrying her or runs off with a married woman or a girl shall pay 1000 grosh to the Church, 500 grosh to the chiefs and 10 rams. [837]

2. Whoever tears his face in mourning and lamentation for the dead, shall pay 1000 grosh to the Church, 1000 grosh to the chiefs and 10 rams. [765]

3. Whoever does not permit the chiefs and fine-collectors to carry out a tribal law will be fined 500 grosh and 5 rams. [696]

4. Whoever commits a murder during a truce or after the feud has been compounded will be fined 6 purses and 10 rams. [628]

5. Whoever fires a rifle in a house where there is a wedding shall, whether he be a guest or the master of the house, pay 500 grosh and 5 rams. [585]

The same fine shall be paid by whoever annoys another with abuse at table whether at a dinner or a wedding.

6. Whoever acts contrary to these laws, whether he be chief, fine-collector, or commoner, shall pay 3000 grosh. [554]

Brahim Beg *serxherde*
Kasem Beg *bylikbash*
Dodë Prençi bajraktar
Zenel Shebani
Gjokë Doda
Keq Prela
Zef Gjeka
Prelë Toma
Gjelosh Nika
Vukusa' Leka
Brahim Vuksani

[In front of each of these names there is a Turkish seal.]

## VII. Solemn Pledge for Flock and Shepherd in Nikaj and Shalë, St Prende's Day 1894.

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(From Father Gjeçov, *Kanùn*, pp. 119–20.)

1. As regards roads it has been enacted as follows:

From the fountain in Faqe to the crucifix in Brazhdë the road is

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[1] (Note by Father Gjeçov: Shpellë is the place where Bajzë and district take water.)

[Pledge for Flocks + Shepherds in Nikaj + Curraj, St. John's Day, 1895]

681 [766] 3. Nobody may help to bury a murderer till three years have passed unless the master of the feud wishes. When somebody does help to bury him five purses must be paid to the master of the feud, either in money or in beasts, as may be arranged among themselves.

[628] 4. A murderer is never under a flock-and-shepherd guarantee until the murder has been avenged or the feud composed.

5. A cutter of pine slivers and a reaper with sickle are under a pledge of safety from the eve of St Anthony to the eve of Our Lady of Alshiqe.

6. A mower with scythe is under a pledge of safety.

7. A shooter is under a pledge of safety from the eve of St Anthony to the eve of Our Lady of Alshiqe.

8. The Ndermajë—Livath i Math (Great Meadow)—Shalë road and the Kodër Plak—Shalë road are under a pledge of safety for flock and shepherd.

9. Whoever steals small animals must pay 250 grosh and return two for every one stolen.

Whoever steals a cow or ox must pay 500 grosh and return two for every one stolen.

10. Whoever removes the tiles of a house must pay 500 grosh.

11. If a debtor does not meet his obligations he is to be accused before the head of his ward. If he still does not meet his obligations, he has no pledge of safety and may be robbed and killed until he enters the right path.

Guarantors: 3 tribes.

## IX. Resolutions Made at Kashnjet, Mirditë, on August 17th, 1904.

(From Father Gjeçov, *Kanùn*, p. 128.)

We, the tribe of Dibër, met for some business in General Assembly at Kashnjet and we have examined the business legally as required by God and the Canon of Mirditë.

1. Whoever murders one of his kin shall be expelled for fifteen years from the tribe, his land shall be left untilled and he shall pay a fine of 100 rams and an ox and have his house burned.

2. Whoever allows a man who has murdered one of his own kin to enter his house becomes as guilty as the murderer.

3. The kindred which does not take the lead against such culprits commits a fault against the whole tribe.

[Here follow the names of the leaders, headed by the bajraktar.]

In whatever business the tribe may have these people will take the lead of the whole tribe.

Witness:

Dom Ndue Melguzhi, Pepaj, parish priest of Kashnjet.

[Laws of Shalë, May 12, 1907]

681. laws and gave our oath to abide by them and not to break them. The laws are as follows:

[628] 2. Pecnikaj enacted a law that when a man is murdered the murderer's heir shall find the guarantors and has three days of guaranteed safety. He has to go with the head of his ward to the victim's representative who shall give him a pledge of security for a week[1] and the murderer's 'brethren' shall bring forward two guarantors. If the victim's representative objects, he shall be left to nominate one and the murderer's 'brethren' shall nominate the other.

Whoever murders someone after the enacting of this law and the swearing of this oath has his safety guaranteed for three days.

Whoever commits a murder murders on his own responsibility and his own risk a person under the protection of Pecnikaj and will have a feud and will never be forgiven for that murder and if anyone kills him he does so by order of the whole tribe of Shalë.

3. Although this law was laid down by Pecnikaj, Lotaj, Abat and Bobi concur.

4. As representative for witnessing Theth's oath all Shalë has chosen Tahir Deli, who was at this meeting of the General Assembly.

5. Whoever murders someone in Shalë—apart from the actual murderer—must not burn his house.[2]

6. In case he burns his house[2] he must pay for a fine of four Martini rifles to the Youth of Shalë and must pay twice the value of the house and the damage done to the owner of the house.

7. If, after the 'brethren' of the murderer have gone to their homes, anyone goes to break into one of their houses either to burn it or to kill its men, he must pay to its owner and the Youth 20 purses and a life for a life.

8. Mules are under the protection of the Youth and anyone who takes them takes them subject to the appropriate penalty.

9. What is written in this letter is guaranteed by the bajraktar and the Youth of Shalë and the government's representative.

10. From Prekë Ndue Mashi to Ndue Ulë Bobi whoever pilfers a neighbour's unmilled grain must pay a fine of one ox to the Youth of the tribe and a ram to the government's representative.

## XIII. Covenant of Mat.

(From the Albanian Newspaper *Tomori*, November 7th, 1942.)

681 1. The people of Mat, comprising 5000 families, hereby pledges itself either to denounce to the competent authorities or itself to arrest

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[1] The Italian version above referred to seems to omit this provision for a week's security from revenge.

[2] According to the Italian translation the house of the murderer only shall be burned, and if anyone else's house is set on fire the murderer shall pay the specified fines.

efforts. Jonas died in 1241 and was buried outside Constantinople with full Scythian honours. A huge mound was raised above him, on the sides of which twenty-five of his serving-men, who voluntarily offered themselves, were hanged. Twenty-five horses were also hanged, and the prince thus provided with a mounted escort in another world. Not long afterwards the East expelled the West, and the Comans took part in the expulsion. The markedly Mongol types still common in Macedonia and Bulgaria are partly, maybe, the legacy of the "Coman and Scythian from beyond the Danube." B 608 643

The custom of blood-brotherhood is so widely spread through the world that it was probably practised by other Balkan peoples besides the Comans.

It was very common among the North Albanian tribesmen, both Catholic and Moslem, when I was in the mountains. The Catholic Church regarded it as a pagan survival, and has made no effort to "Christianize" it, as has the Orthodox. The usage of ancient days is, therefore, little changed. In its crudest form the arm, or finger, of each was pricked by a thorn, and either party licked the other's blood. The favourite and more elaborate way was described to me by my old friend, Tony Precha, of Mirdite descent, thus: "I travelled through a dangerous district with a young Moslem when I was a lad. He asked me to be his brother. I had to ask permission of my father, the head of the house. He said theirs was a good house to be allied to. When some time had passed and we still wished for brotherhood, we met, and each tied a tight string round his little finger till it swelled, then pricked the finger, and each let his blood drop on a lump of sugar. I ate his lump and he mine. We were then of the same blood and swore brotherhood. Then I dined at his house, and we gave each other presents of socks knitted in beautiful patterns. He is now dead, but his brothers are my brothers and our children are cousins, and they cannot marry for more than a hundred years." A 608

The interdict against marriage, however, in a case of sworn brotherhood, applied only to the direct descendants of the couple and not to any collaterals. A 608 582

Sugar was used in this case because one party was Moslem. In the case of Christians the blood is always taken in raki or in wine. Red wine, doubtless because most resembling blood, is the correct medium.

Blood-brotherhood was, of course, not reckoned a "forbidden degree" by the Church, but in practice was strictly observed by the people.

The swearing of blood-brotherhood between some members of either side was one of the ways of making peace after a blood-feud. In Dushmani I met a high-spirited youth who had laid in wait on the A 608 628

2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
Albania EG1

831 Balkans than in more civilised and cultured parts of Europe, and the following true story attests to the lengths to which men are prepared to go in order to maintain the code.

628 A young peasant of Epirus who had only recently taken
577 a wife had to go to the war. On leaving he placed her in the
931 care of his brother, charging him by everything he held sacred to guard her honour as if it were his own. On his return, a few years later, he found that the trust had been betrayed—and by the brother himself—and that his wife was about to become a mother. The primitive peasant code demanded the death of both the guilty parties, and the soldier killed his wife with his own hand, but before he could go in pursuit of his brother, who had fled to the mountains, was arrested by the gendarmerie. At the subsequent trial he was sentenced to fifteen year's imprisonment—a sentence which is still unexpired. The man who told me the story said that he paid a visit to the gaol and had an interview with the prisoner, who at first stated that there had been a reconciliation between his brother and himself. The visitor, who knew that this could not possibly be true, said, " Why do you lie to me ? " And, as the man remained silent, continued, " I know that you will go back when you are free and kill your brother. And what will be the use of that ? It will only mean another long term of imprisonment."

The prisoner nodded. " Yes ", he said. " But when my imprisonment is over I shall once more be able to live honourably amongst my own people."

Until, therefore, the disgrace has been wiped out by the

blood of his brother this man cannot take his rightful position 628
in the family or in the community to which he belongs, and 577 831
rather than be an outcast and scorned by his people he is prepared to spend a great part of his life in gaol. Such is the Balkan code of honour.

At Koritza I found that the money in circulation was no 436
longer Italian. Here, as at Tirana, one transacted business with the krone (or crown) instead of with the lira, as at Durazzo, Valona, Argyrocastron and in the South generally. The currency, moreover, was entirely metal, and consisted, in addition to the Austrian krone itself, of Turkish silver coins, Greek silver drachmae, Serbian dinars, and so forth—
the basis being gold. There are no banks, but there are 453
money-changers who are always quite willing to cash British or American notes, and who have drawers full to the brim with gold—French napoleons, English sovereigns and half-sovereigns, and American five-dollar pieces. I had not seen so much gold at one time since the old days before the war when bank cashiers in English used to gather it up from the counter by the shovelful.

The absence of banks must, one would imagine, be a 453
considerable hindrance to the commercial development of a 457
country. Nevertheless it is remarkable how little difference it seems to make in Albania, and I began to wonder whether banks are, after all, as essential as we are prone to think. It was likely, however, at the time of which I am writing, that an Albanian bank would shortly be established with headquarters at Tirana. A proposal had been made by the

# The Vendetta[1]

At that time, the blood feud and the 628
vendetta were the chief preoccupations of the mountain folk 577
and murders and killings were of frequent occurrence. Men were liable to be shot at any moment, and often were shot, solely because their ancestors of several generations back had quarrelled over some trivial matter. Albanians claim to-day that the vendetta is a thing of the past, but I had no difficulty in ascertaining that the claim is not well founded; vendetta crimes are still common, and even while I was in Scutari a murder "in revenge" was reported to the police.

The following story illustrates very well the sacrifices demanded by the code:—

A bitter blood feud had waged for several generations between two families in a remote mountain district. The head of one family died and the headship, and with it the duty of carrying on the vendetta, devolved upon another member of the family who was, as it happened, the village priest. One would have thought that his office would release him from the necessity of committing a murder. But it did not. He bided his time and shot his enemy dead. Then, as there was no other priest within many miles of the place, he officiated—difficult though it is to credit it—at the funeral of his victim.

Notwithstanding that a vendetta murder is committed [681] in defence of the family honour it is, if the gendarmes succeed in tracing and arresting the perpetrator, invariably punished by hanging. The code of the mountaineers is so strict, however, that the penalty acts as no deterrent. A man who fails in his duty to kill an enemy of his house is outlawed

[1] [two years before World 275 War I -- Analyst]

628 [577] from his own fireside, and he would rather face the gallows than the contempt of his family.

Even apart from the vendetta, the Albanian of this type is sometimes rather too ready to use his gun. Shortly before I was in Scutari a man was killed in a quarrel. It seems that the local schoolmaster had occasion to chastise one of the scholars. The boy's father was angry about it and called on the schoolmaster to remonstrate, taking a friend with him. In the ensuing dispute all lost their tempers and the friend unwisely "butted in." Whereupon the schoolmaster drew a revolver and shot the man dead.

674 681 The act which makes the carrying of firearms illegal is very necessary, and it is a pity that it cannot be enforced in this part of Albania as it has been elsewhere. But the inaccessibility of the mountain villages, and the lawlessness which makes the carrying of a weapon almost obligatory for self-protection, are at the moment insuperable difficulties. All that the gendarmes have been able to do so far is to insist that rifles shall be deposited at the police post outside Scutari before their owners enter the town. This explains what at first puzzled me—why the men in the streets of Scutari and in the Scutari bazaar were decorated with belts full of cartridges and yet no guns or rifles were in evidence.

## 8. The Oath

A M 626 728 628 The oath played a most important part in the whole tribal area of Albania and Montenegro. The tribes lived, till recent times, in a constant state of blood-feud both with each other and within the tribes, and this was regulated only by means of sworn intervals of peace. In Montenegro you were in "krv" (blood) or under oath ("pod vjere"). In Albania, in "gjak" (blood) or under "besa." The tribesman as a rule kept the oath when formally sworn with rigid fidelity. A man forsworn was universally condemned. How by means of such oaths blood-feuds were settled we have told in another chapter.

A 626 783 *Manner of Taking Oath.*—Among the Albanian tribes there still exists the very antique custom of swearing the oath upon a stone. The priest and the hodja have succeeded in adding respectively the cross and Allah to his oath, but to the priest's vexation the mountain man persistently says, as he throws down the stone in the circle of headmen, "Per guri i per kruch" (by the stone and the cross), and puts the stone first. When a Catholic tribesman had confessed and received absolution he liked to come to church next time carrying a stone in proportion to the size of the sins confessed. What pact he had sworn on the stone I could not understand. The stone in this case was said to represent penitence. Some priests forbade the practice; others said it was unnecessary, but allowed it because this visible sign of contrition seemed really to help them. "But," said Padre Kiri of Thethi, laughing, "when a man came with a rock on his shoulder I told him he might leave it at the door."

A reason suggested for this custom is that the penitent transferred his sin to the stone and so got rid of it.

In trials before the elders a man accused of crime would swear his innocence upon a stone and fling it down before his judges.

M 626 783 *Montenegro.*—I did not find the custom in Montenegro, but it was clearly common till recently. Prince Danilo, in his Code of 1855, decrees (Law 65): "If after this day a Montenegrin or Brdjanin present himself before justice with a stone tied to his neck, whether innocent or guilty he shall be flogged."

M 754 The custom, it appears, has been flogged out. But in spite of Danilo's floggings I still found the custom of throwing a stone with a curse on to the reputed grave of a bad man. On the western side of Montenegro are several stone piles, and many such are to be found in the Herzegovina, some of which have been excavated and proved to be prehistoric tumuli. Krsto firmly believed all such heaps to be "proklete gomile" (accursed heaps) over the body of a desperate criminal who

S 608 tonsure of his godchild, following the church practice of
852 taking hair from the temples and the occiput, places upon his
302 head a new cap—perhaps once a tribal emblem, at any rate
a protective garment with special properties and associa-
S tions—and makes and receives certain presents which witness
to the contract of *kum*ship. It is thought that the hair of the
[782] child was offered to the presiding spirit, or the genius of
[776] birth, who in turn have been connected with ancestral spirits,
inhabiting streams and trees. As a precaution, the hair is
carefully preserved; it is not allowed to fall to the ground,
but caught in a cloth and afterwards rolled in wax, and
either then or later it is placed or buried under a young rose
S tree. For the child concerned it is a passage rite. It is a
[551] current belief that a child is not safe until it has been bap-
tised, and until then it is known by a protective, misleading
nickname. The rite of tonsure also ensures its security, partly,
surely, by fixing its identity and establishing relationship with
a sponsor or protector, who becomes responsible in part for
it, and with the society on which its life and strength depend.
S Weakly children are baptised in haste, and where the tonsure
852 rite has lost its first meaning, I have heard of it as an extra
608 precautionary rite for ailing children. When a child is born
[755] sickly, or of parents whose other children have died early,
there is a custom by which it is carried outside the house, say
to a cross-roads. The father or woman who carries the child
generally beseeches the first passer-by to stand as godfather.
Sometimes the child is left for the first who finds it to pick
up and adopt, or claim as godchild, and thus give it his
protection. On Kosovo the child is moreover carefully bound
round and laid, its face to the ground, with its head to the
East. The finder turns the child over and reverses its position,
pronouncing a blessing of long life.

A The rôle of redeemer is clearly seen in an Albanian rite
852 quoted by Hahn. The children to be sponsored, at the cere-
608 monial reconciliation of parties of a blood feud, were brought
628 in their cradles by women to the house of the wronged party,
and set with the children's heads turned to the West. The

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935

EF6 Serbs EF6

Albania EG1 ●

Balkan Peoples E13

sign of their acceptance was the turning of the children round so that their heads were to the East, symbolising release from death, and in this case, pardon.

A 852 608 628 ●

S B 608 628 178 852

The special relationship between protector and protected, which has been stressed in descriptions of primitive society, was also characteristic of the Balkan peoples; the pardoned murderer, the man whose life had been spared, or who had claimed protection or some special boon—all of which naturally had to be done in a special way—was from then onwards not only the lifelong and intimate ally of his protector, but enjoyed the other's greatest respect and consideration.[1] It was laid down in the traditional regulations for concluding a vendetta that the party of the murderer should give a certain number of sponsor children and blood brothers, according to the number of lives owing, to be received by the offended person and his relatives in the usual way. This was not merely a means of securing peace by a sacred alliance but in the nature of a compensating fine. The murderer placed himself and his children at the mercy of the men he had wronged. From the conventions attaching to pardon and redemption the new relationship proceeds. It is possible that formerly a real substitute for the life in dispute was offered, and that it was entirely at the pleasure of the offended party to spare or to pardon the children. Only by a special ceremony could peace be made without blood. The feast which usually followed was a compensatory sacrifice and included a memorial of the dead. These customs amongst the South Slavs have died out; vendetta is no longer an open tribal business, and descriptions of the ceremonies are often lacking in detail, and particularly the important detail of the exact manner in which the *kum* received the children. However, the symbolical act of raising from death is occasionally mentioned, and on enquiry I found that it was remembered in tradition, here and there, unambiguously as such.

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[1] There are common peasant sayings of the form: 'Of whom should you ask a favour if not of me, who helped you in the past?'

6: Troyanovitch E-4, 5 (no date)1909
EF6 Serbs EF6
Albania EG1

S 628 deeds of their forefathers. With the Albanians the demand for revenge is even more terrible. A [628 752] When a doctor of the people trepans a patient, and the patient dies, the family demand in compensation the doctor's head, or that of some member of his family. In case of an insult or murder, not only are the father, brother, son, and near relatives called upon to take revenge, but even entire Brastvos, tribes, and Nahiye. Revenge or a money compensation must be had even after a hundred years. The relatives of a man who has been slain always preserve his bloodstained garments as an incitement to revenge. Formerly, when a powerful enemy entered the land, the vendetta was temporarily laid aside. When a Krvnik (one guilty of murder) is obliged to go to work, or for any reason to leave the house, he first sends his Pobratim or a friend of the dead man's family to demand a month's reprieve, or as long as he desires. This is called Besa (literally, 'trust'). S [574] If he obtains it, he might freely enter even the house itself of the murdered man. In general the harshness of the vendetta may be greatly mitigated. It is not an infrequent occurrence that immediately after a murder the murderer seeks refuge under the roof of some of the dead man's family, and thus 'places himself into their hands.' In this case they safeguard him for the sake of their own pride; and if he is in imminent peril there, they conduct him to other friends or kinsmen, and these on their part conduct him elsewhere, according to the arrangements made. Once he is out of their hands, however, they all watch for an opportunity to kill him. Grahovo, on the boundaries of Herzegovina, Dalmatia, and Montenegro, was at one time considered a neutral territory, where a murderer dare not be slain. Other sanctuaries for the fugitive were churches and cemeteries. This recalls the decisions of the ecclesiastical councils of the 6th and 9th centuries, by which criminals were protected in certain circumstances. In ancient times, for instance, when the delinquent took refuge in the sacred wood, the Celts and Germans withheld capital punishment from him. It is still a rule that no boys under fifteen are to be slain, and no women whatever. Hence, when blood has been shed by some family and it is threatened with reprisals (vendetta), only the women and boys under fifteen S [712] belonging to it are to be seen working in the fields, while the men remain in stone towers, which have been built for the purpose, and watch through the loopholes for the enemy.

S 628 608 When it becomes apparent that the hostile parties desire to become reconciled, a few men are chosen from the Vassoyevitch tribe (on the Montenegrin frontier, but under the dominion of the Turks), to whom is entrusted the task of settling the matter. These men are called Kmets. As a demonstration

cure. The Mountain Ghegs also grow much 245
fruit on trees near their houses. The chief
species are quinces, pears, and apples.

Women have charge of milking the cows [462]
and making butter, curds, and cheese. Small
boys are usually employed as shepherds, and 221
lead their flocks high on the mountains. In the 233
summertime many Gheg families drive their
cattle up to the Alpine meadows on the mountain
passes, and keep them there weeks at a
time while they make butter and cheese.
While on these heights they live in small temporary
houses (fig. 8, *c*).[1] The people of Klementi,
however, who live in high valleys, drive
their flocks to the plain of Scutari every year
for winter pasture.

Animal husbandry furnishes the Ghegs not 231
only with much of their food, but also with a
supply of energy, for they use oxen in ploughing,
and horses for travel and the transport of
goods. In the wintertime they keep their cows
and horses indoors, while the pigs, in Catholic
regions, have special sties. Late winter and
early spring is the season when food is scarce. 262
The corncrib may be empty, and only the seed
corn hanging in bunches from the walls will
remain untouched. The cows are dry, and
the flitches of pork and bacon gone from the
ceiling.

This is the time when the mountain people, 261
their tempers more and more irritable, used to
turn to raiding, and while some rustled each 628
other's animals, others came down out of the
mountains to steal cattle from the people on
the plains. Mirdita raided Zadrima, and Mati
raided the low country around Elbasan. This
annual hunger was the result of a complete
economic occupance of the land, coupled with
an excess of births over deaths. Raiding
brought in more food, but feuding caused
more deaths. Between the two, plus a certain
amount of emigration, the balance was reached.

Transportation in Ghegnia was, in 1929, as 491
poor as anywhere in Europe. There were a
certain number of roads over which people
could walk, in some places ride animals, and
in most, carry goods on animal back. In a
few places the trails were too steep for animals,
and men had to pack in goods by pannier. The
principal road, which will be described later,[2]
goes from Scutari and Lesh by way of Vau i
Denjës to Puka, then on to Kukës, and across

[1] [See Cat. 116, p.108.. Analyst

[2] [See C.S. 116 p 42a- Analyst]

485 with cooking privileges at the fireplace, while the host brews coffee for sale, and also dispenses *raki*. After his guests are in for the night he locks the door, and cannot ordinarily be persuaded to unlock it before morning, no matter how urgent the needs of the guests to go outside. This precaution is necessary owing to the frequency of violence.

Some of the *hanjis* are local men. Others come from Kruja, the home of innkeepers. All of them live as bachelors. This system, like the *kiragi* business, brings a certain number of outsiders into the country. All in all there are probably 12 to 18 *hans* in Ghegnia, in addition to the one European-style hotel at
574 Peshkopia. The Catholics do not use this system; in their tribal areas guests are put up by important individuals through a system of re-
● [628] ciprocal hospitality. Since local feuds are usually more prevalent in Catholic than in Moslem country, travel across the former is relatively light.

438 There remains only the question of trade, which has been partly covered.[1] On the whole it may be said of the mountain Ghegs that they live by a regional, or geographic, and perhaps also ethnic, division of labor. The ordinary man is a farmer, who produces firewood, cereals, legumes, tobacco, wool, milk products, and sometimes wooden spoons. His wife produces cloth, crocheted stockings, embroidered scarfs, baskets, eggs, and a few other local products. These mountain products find their way to the market towns. Usually men and women come together; sometimes only the women make the trip, and sometimes the whole family stays at home, sending the goods by a *kiragi*.[2]

The Ghegs are able to export these things because they produce a slight surplus of agricultural products. One reason for the surplus may be that they use a number of labor-saving devices, including fulling and mealing mills run by water power.[3] This gives them more time for other pursuits, but does not increase their complexity of relations at home, since the mills are small and serve individual groups of related families.

[1] [See cat 116, pp. 20a -20b --Analyst]

[2] [See cat 116, pp 20a -20b Analyst]

[3] [see cat 116 pp 17b - 18a--Analyst]

163 128 pressure is created. It varies from 4.2 in Mati to 6.6 in Malsia e Madhe, with the largest families on either side of the mountains, the smallest in the middle. Even the smallest are too large for the landscape to feed without a change in methods of land utilization, a change which has not yet arrived.

166 In the country near Scutari, the city will take some of the excess. In the lands east of the Black Drin, migration onto the plain used to be possible, and habitual. Cvijič has shown[2] how, along the entire Dinaric chain, there has been for centuries a steady flow of population out of the mountains. In the center of the mountains, however, such emigration is not easy. Particularly in the old days when Catholics were not welcome in Moslem territory, the mountain people had to stay at home. ● [628] There is only one universal, immemorial method of disposing of excess population under these circumstances. That is the method found in the Rif, in the Caucasus, in the Kafir country of Afghanistan, and in many other places—feuding. If enough males are killed off, the population remains constant.

165 Males only are killed. A few statistics on deaths by violence are available.[3] During the period 1901–05 the ratios in a number of northern communities were Toplana, 39 per cent; Dushman, 23 per cent; Spaç, 32 per cent; Shala, 26 per cent; Orosh, 21 per cent; Nikaj, Shoshi, and Kačinari, 25 per cent each. Double these figures and one finds between 42 per cent and 64 per cent of males dying in internecine 163 warfare. As if some natural mechanism were deliberately trying to compensate for this one-sided loss, we find a sex ratio of 163 male births to every 100 females born.

Sex ratios of this magnitude have been found before in feuding countries, and in fact the ratio of male births has been shown to rise in our own country in time of war. The biological explanation[4] is that people living under conditions of warfare marry and produce children at an earlier age than they would in time of peace. Some mechanism upon which all biologists do not agree selects the sperm cells, or the fertilized eggs, in the mother's

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[2] Cvijič, 1918.

[3] Nopcsa, 1925. Data compiled by the Catholic clergy.

POLITICS AND FEUDING

592 THE smallest political institution in tribal Gheg society is the household, the extended family living together, which is also an economic institution. The head of the household is the oldest male of the parental or grandparental generation, the patriarch. So strong is the feeling for age-grading in Albania that men will obey their fathers as faithfully at 40 and 50 as in their teens. Since all sons do not necessarily live with their fathers, but some may occupy separate houses, the institution of the household may thus be expanded spatially, although the relationships are maintained.

[672] [628] The household is a unit of warfare; when a man commits murder within his own tribe, his household suffers together. In seeking vengeance, a man can wipe out the blot on his family honor by killing the brother of his enemy; responsibility is held to be collective. If one member of a household kills another, which happens but very rarely,[1] nothing is done. The loss is that of the family.

621 The next unit is the village. It may be a compact group of houses, surrounded by its farmland and pasture; or it may consist of isolated homesteads, each in its own land. The latter is the more usual form. In either case, it has some central building, a mosque or a church; or it may merely have a flat place, usually shaded by an oak, where the elders
623 meet. Each village is supposed to have 12 elders, whose office is partly hereditary, partly elective. Various families habitually furnish one man each to fill this position. The word for elder is *plak*, which Miss Durham traces back to the time of Strabo.[2] One of these elders is the *kryeplak*, literally, head elder. In one village in Has, when I measured the *kryeplak*, he told the recorder that he was "mayor" of the village. He calls the elders together when events arise that need their

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[1] Miss Durham gives one instance from Dukagin (Durham, 1928, pp. 69-70).

[2] Durham, 1928, p. 14.

619 634 114 Travel in Ghegnia in the years 1908–13 would not have been easy, even for an experienced man. For a woman to have made these journeys is something of a miracle. Others may be the result of the process of amalgamation, for many of the "tribes" which she mentions were miserable fragments of former populations decimated by warfare, and massacred, in some cases, by the Serbs. By 1929 a considerable realignment must have taken place in the whole area north of the Drin, and especially in the regions which she designates as Postripa and Pulati. In any case the 10 groups of people whom I have designated as tribes were so considered by the people with whom I worked in 1929, and form more or less self-contained, intermarrying units, sufficient for our present purpose.

619 628 ● Under the tribal system warfare was almost continuous. The underlying cause was of course population pressure. The overt causes were seduction, theft of women, elopement, cattle-stealing, and general raiding. It did not take much to give offense, particularly in the late winter, when food was scarce. Even a man who had almost enough to eat himself would be under severe tension, because of the general nervous strain of his kinsmen and dependents, and consequent maladjustment within the household.

A chance blow, a harsh word, even a play on words which is very easy in Shqip, or above all a cruel joke—these seemingly minor conflicts often led to gunplay and murder, with 522 consequent feuding. I had several occasions to feel their Iron Age wit, so much like that of the Norse sagas. Once my host in Zadrima remarked, in front of many people, that I had the skinniest legs he had ever seen, and wondered how I could walk. The assembled company burst into Homeric roars. On another occasion, in a Puka *han*, I lifted my head suddenly and hit it a sound smack on a protruding nail, partially stunning myself in the process. This was the funniest thing in the world. Once again, when Farnsworth and I crawled into our sleeping bags for the night, the whole household laughed and laughed. When we asked what was the matter, they said, "Just think, if the house should catch on fire! You

821 wouldn't be able to get out of those sacks, Ha! Ha! Ha!"

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What happens when a man kills another of the same tribe can best be learned from the following quotation from Miss Durham.[7]

> Murder may be the result of a quarrel or it may be a blood-feud, the cause of which is more or less remote. In either case the man who has taken blood flies at once to a safe place outside the tribe. [Miss Durham is using "tribe" in the restricted sense, as before.] Any house is bound to give him hospitality. In the case of a feud, he is regarded as a most unfortunate man who has but done his duty. He at once proclaims his deed. The headmen of his tribe then meet and order his house to be burnt. Among the Dukagini the council has power also to destroy his crops, cut down his fruit trees, slaughter his beasts, and condemn the land to lie unworked for a term of years. An incredible amount of food-stuff is thus wasted. In this group not only the man who has taken blood, but all the males of his "house," are liable for blood, so they, too, have to fly. The "house" is the home maybe of a whole family community–forty people. But the law is carried out to the last letter. Such desolated spots have I seen. But "It is the Canon, so must be obeyed," was the answer to any remonstrance I made. The women and children may scatter and find shelter in other houses if they can; they usually do. A man can save his house if he can return to it and defend it three days successfully, so that the men sent by the council cannot set fire to it. I saw "a very brave man" in Berisha who had three times saved his house thus. Or a man can save his house by inviting the head of another mehala [household] to act as house lord and defend it with his own men. This might cause severe fighting. The council, to prevent this, then as a rule agrees to burn the house only and spare the property. The amount of property to be destroyed was always decided by the council. . . . In addition to the burning of the house, in all tribes a fine has to be paid. . . . in sheep or cattle. . . . to the Turkish Government. In the case of Maltsia e Madhe this was paid . . . in Scutari. . . . punctually . . . . The Turkish Government had a certain hold on all the nearer tribes, for it could hold as hostage any member of a tribe which owed blood-gelt and came to market at Scutari. The outlying tribes of Dukagini by no means always either notified or paid for their murders.

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Feuds being very weakening to a tribe, the headmen of the tribe or friends of the family would attempt to stop the feud. Blood-feuds of the Dukagini

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[7] Durham, 1928, pp. 66-68.

[8] Miss Durham translated *bairaktar* as "head of the tribe." This explains her confusion between tribes and *bairaks* noted earlier.

> and Pulati tribes are settled in the mountains; those of Maltsia e Madhe were settled in Scutari before the representatives of those tribes [to the Turkish Government] who lived there. 628 682 619
>
> The peace-making is preceded by the "gjaksur" (he who owes blood) sending some friends to the "zoti i gjakut" (lord of blood) to ask for "besa" (promise of truce). This may be granted and further prolonged, and during the truce the gjaksur and his relatives are safe. To end the feud . . . twenty-four con-jurors are needed to swear the peace oath with the gjaksur. The plaintiff (lord of blood) has the right to name them. Or they may be named by the "bairaktar"[*] . . . . They examine the facts and decide if peace can be made and on what terms. If all twenty-four agree to take the peace oath with him he is then reckoned innocent, and he and his family do not owe any further blood, but pay blood gelt to the zoti i gjakut. This varied from about £25 to £50. . . .
>
> Agreement having been come to, the whole party goes into the church (or mosque) before which the council has been held . . . and in the presence of the priest the gjaksur swears his innocence. He no longer owes blood. [After the others have all sworn] . . . the gjaksur and the zoti i gjakut frequently ratify the peace by swearing blood brotherhood. . . .
>
> The oath being taken and the blood-gelt paid, the man is free to return to his burnt house and repair it. Being as a rule of solid stone, only the roof and woodwork need renewing. If he is a popular man, other members of the tribe help him both to pay the fine and start life again.[*]

Within the *bairak*, then, political mechanisms tended to reduce the frequency of murder by making it expensive. Murder between *bairaks* would likewise be discouraged if the central authority of the tribe were strong. Otherwise inter-*bairak* feuds could rage for decades before peacemaking. Whole tribes could likewise be in blood with each other, or with single *bairaks*, just as Mirdita was in blood with Lura during the period in which we are interested.

A central political authority tended to strengthen the ties between tribal members, and with the numerous council meetings that were called, members of the more prominent families got about frequently within their tribal boundaries. This would give them opportunity to arrange marriages some distance 619

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[*] In this whole section I have used Miss Durham's spelling of local names, now obsolete. Also, I have left the definite article before *zoti i gjakut*, where it is grammatically superfluous.